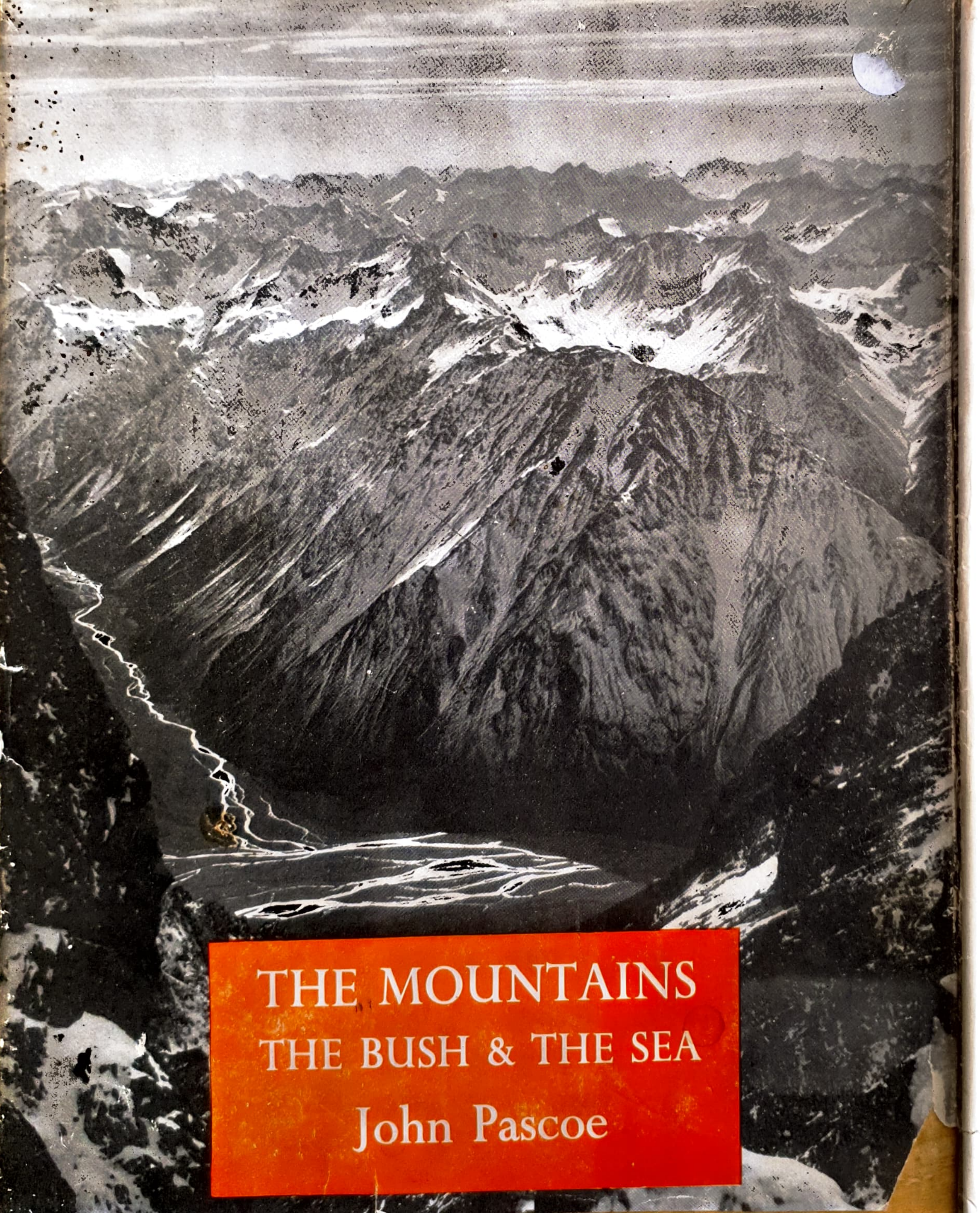

THE MOUNTAINS THE BUSH & THE SEA

John Pascoe

THE MOUNTAINS THE BUSH & THE SEA

IN ITS ninety-seven large plates this book brings together an unusual selection of New Zealand mountain, forest and coastal scenes from the camera of John Pascoe.

The author has been climbing mountains for twenty years. His enterprise has taken him on one hundred and fifteen mountains, of which exactly a fifth were first ascents. He has never made a journey or a climb without a camera. His mountaineering and tramping has been varied with historical research about the valleys he has traversed. Allied to these interests has been his work as official photographer for the Department of Internal Affairs, and as Illustrations Editor of the Government's Centennial publications and of the New Zealand War Histories. His first book, *Unclimbed New Zealand*, was published in London in 1939 and has recently reached a second edition. His paper on the exploration of the Adams Glacier region, Westland, was published by the *Journal* of the Royal Geographical Society, London.

Mr. Pascoe is a past Vice-President of the Canterbury Mountaineering Club, and of the Tararua Tramping Club.

Price 22s. 6d.

TA/K 22/6

Mehemea ka tuoho ahau me maunga teitei
Should I bow my head, let it be to a lofty mountain

AN EASTER TRAIL

Assault Icefall, Arrowsmith Range

THE MOUNTAINS
THE BUSH & THE SEA

By John Pascoe

UNCLIMBED NEW ZEALAND

THE MOUNTAINS THE BUSH & THE SEA

A Photographic Report

by

JOHN PASCOE

WHITCOMBE & TOMBS LIMITED
1958

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PERSONALITIES ONLY

The captions to the illustrations do not include the names of people. In this modest footnote I set out these names, not merely to benefit the curious but to complete my record. The numbers are those of the pages.

Cedric Willson, Keith Woods, Kath Whitworth (2); Cedric Willson (4); I. O. F. Thyne (14); Duncan Hall (15); Dorothy Pascoe (18 and 19); Duncan Matheson (31); Lawry Walker (36); Shirley Porter (39); Gavin Malcolmson (46); Stan Conway, John Clegg (47); Bernie McClelland (58); Murray Spencer (60); Bernie McGlynn (65); Duncan Darroch (67); John Pascoe, Bert Hines (69); Dorothy Pascoe (75); Marie Dillon (84); Andy Dillon (85): and Sara Pascoe (95).

Introduction

THE MAN IS NOT BORN WHO CAN ILLUSTRATE WITH HIS CAMERA all of our New Zealand mountains, our seas or the country which rises, falls and stretches between them. It is left for each man to travel according to his enterprise and to photograph according to his purpose. One man may find in scenery only an escape from machines, while another uses it as a springboard to bounce into view his virtuosity with cloud-faking, as though the cumulus must grace every landscape in the manner that a Georgian house must have its shutters. Another man will make of scenery a backdrop for human activity; it is this use that I favour as much as any.

Then again, all scenery is not so accommodating. The cliff may be too steep, the glacier or tide-rip too broken, or the forest too thick to permit human work to progress for the benefit of cameras. The photographer may capture starkness without man, or man without scenery in the way that the composer gives the oboe a run away from the orchestra when the spirit moves him to disassociate individuality and mass movement.

My first aim in this photographic report is to relate mountain, forest and coastline environment to the lives of people. From Mount Egmont in the North Island, travel with my camera down to Mount Cook in the South. Regret if you will, that I have not yet photographed Otago[1], and I will share your regret, and temper it with a promise to climb there and one day to expose many rolls of film. Regret also that I am no yachtsman; no one regrets that more than I do. Regrets—cast them away. Cherish instead the country and people that fill the dots and squares of the half-tone screen that gives you these illustrations. Are you hungry? Sniff the bacon and eggs of *Breakfast* (page 78). Are you sick of pavements? Let your eye travel among the *Maze of Distant Ridges* (page 59).

But first you must consider the mechanical limitation of this medium of photography. I choose to disregard statements by eminent photographers such as 'pictorial photographs are pictures made with a camera by an artist for the benefit of other artists', or that photographic art is 'the beautiful representation of nature for the purpose of giving disinterested pleasure'. If I had the choice I would draw in line or paint in water colour or oils. I am no artist, and have not that choice. As a consolation I photograph people and scenery. But I do not hold myself out as an artist (photographic). I am merely a traveller who reports with his camera. If any photographs have form or beauty, that is accidental and is not in itself the object of my clicking. The mechanics of this business demand certain technical considerations, and I subordinate them to notes at the end of this book; they need not interrupt the flow of this discourse. My point is that technique should not in itself be an end.

---

[1] Since the first appearance of this book, I have taken many photographs in Otago on transalpine and climbing trips. Most of these photographs are still unpublished.

A whimsical sincerity and a deep feeling for country and for people will be far more valuable to a photographer than a knowledge of the chemical qualities of film emulsion or of the optics that make his sky filters effective.

Suppose then that you, my fellow mountaineers, my man in the street, my general public are interested in the results of my photography and not in the mechanism of its accomplishment. Are you a friend of people? Then meet my friends, and discuss whether environment affects them. The *Deer Killer* (page 14) has the cheery grin of his free life, and the sheepman of *A Muster Begun* (page 36) the calm dignity of his kind. The young man of *Mountaineer Sunbound* (page 60) with forehead wrinkled with wonder about a new route up a tough peak contrasts with the shining excitement of *Ski Novice* (page 18), and the hard life of Westland back-country is reflected in the studies of *Prospector's Wife* (page 84) and of *Gold Prospector* (page 85). The steady rhythm of a large tramping party is shown by *Exercise* (page 28), and the poise of a steady mountaineer by *Advance* (page 48). The nonchalance of a child holding a dead and smelly fish is clear in *Fishergirl* (page 95) and the pre-occupation of men at work in *A Dip Begun* (page 37). The quietness of view brooding is implicit in *The Promise of Early Morning* (page 6) or in *Objective* (page 26). Share with me the pleasure of an ambition fulfilled in *From the Divide at* 8658 *feet* (page 53) and the hope of one not yet realised in *Mountain Art* (page 66).

Where men shelter from wind and storm in the mountains is another story. Sometimes it is under the totara slabs of *Gold Prospector's Hut* (page 46), a small tent such as *Moraine Camp* (page 47), or even the stark simplicity of *Inside the Ice Cave* (page 65). The permanent homes of men who live in the ranges are picturesque as *At the Out Station* (page 8). Animals too have their place in my documentary record. The horse under *The Musterer* (page 31), the sheep dog of *His Bark* (page 35) have no less pride of place than the sheep of *She Obeys* (page 34) or of *Farewell* (page 96). And the Universal (Bren) Carrier has a peace-time utility in *Machine Age* (page 39).

Scenery is of course of absorbing interest. Some photographs show sights not recorded till I took them, such as *Mist Rising* (page 55) or *First Exploration* (page 72). Land forms may excite ordinary people as well as students of geology. Sometimes nature is at her best, gowned with the velvety contours of snowgrass, or at her bleakest with arid rugosities stripped of vegetation and scarred by glaciers. Perhaps our land is rocky, then examine the pitches of *Face of Rock* (page 21) or of *To a Gap* (page 49), the ridges of *Spur Rising* (page 54), the screes of *Chamois Country* (page 15), or the coastal foreground of *Open Sea* (page 89). Again the land may be covered by such chill and immobile alpine sculpture as in *Mid-Winter Design* (page 22), *Below the Ice Walls* (page 68), *Dignity* (page 71), or *Glacier Ascent* (page 76). Crevasses have their symmetry, and glaciers their upheaved nobility. The contour of *Col to Westland* (page 45) shows the grace of a high alpine pass and contrasts with the sweep of a ski-ing ground of *Spring Snow Melting* (page 17). Compare the narrow valley of *Anzac Morning* (page 74) with the sense of space given in *Face of Land* (page 20); these rank high among mountain joys. Similarly height from depth, as in *From Westland at 2000 feet* (page 52) compares well with depth from height, as in *Meins Knob Outline* (page 41). *Mountain Lake* (page 12) would please the lover of *Inland Sea* (page 90). To the mountaineer river movement is as exciting as a ground swell is to the sailor, and *River Descent* (page 77) carries with it the memory of the sibilance that was lost in the dissonant roar of *Flood Waters* (page 42). The forests that clothe the land add their serenity, from the elegant exotics of *Sheepman's Home* (page 86) to the variety of natives in *River Flats* (page 81) or of *Lower Reaches* (page 83). The four seasons are well represented in this photographic report, and the weather is described by such cloud formations as in *The Threat of Storm Clouds* (page 7) or *Barometer Rising* (page 11). Indeed sky effects are the delight of most photographers and there is no artiness in the cloudbank of *Peak Below* (page 3) or of the filmy blanket of *Early Summer Pattern* (page 23). The glow of morning is exemplified by *Sunlight* (page 73) and the stimulus of dawn by *North Island from the South* (page 88) which cost me a night alone on a hill top to capture that effect.

Such is my theme: that the people and the land reward the casual traveller, and I need expand it no further. Should I explain that the first of these photographs was taken in 1930 and the most recent within two months of writing this introduction? I took them because I liked taking them, in the same way I climbed mountains for pleasure to resolve hunger for adventure and eagerness for exercise away from the confines of cities.

JOHN DOBRÉE PASCOE

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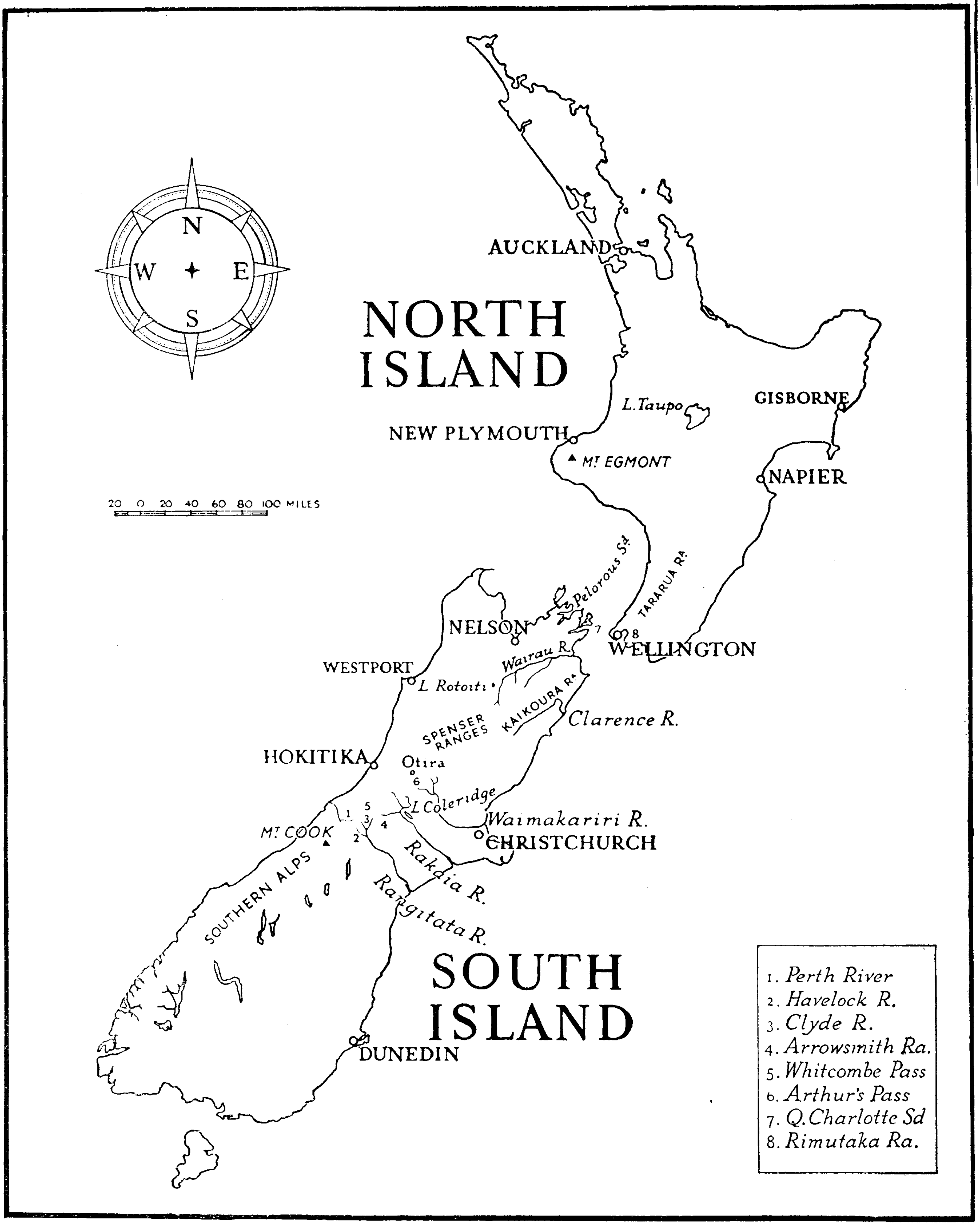
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Wairau R.
L. Rotoiti
KAIKOURA Ra.
Clarence R.
SPENSER RANGES
HOKITIKA
Otira
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L. Coleridge
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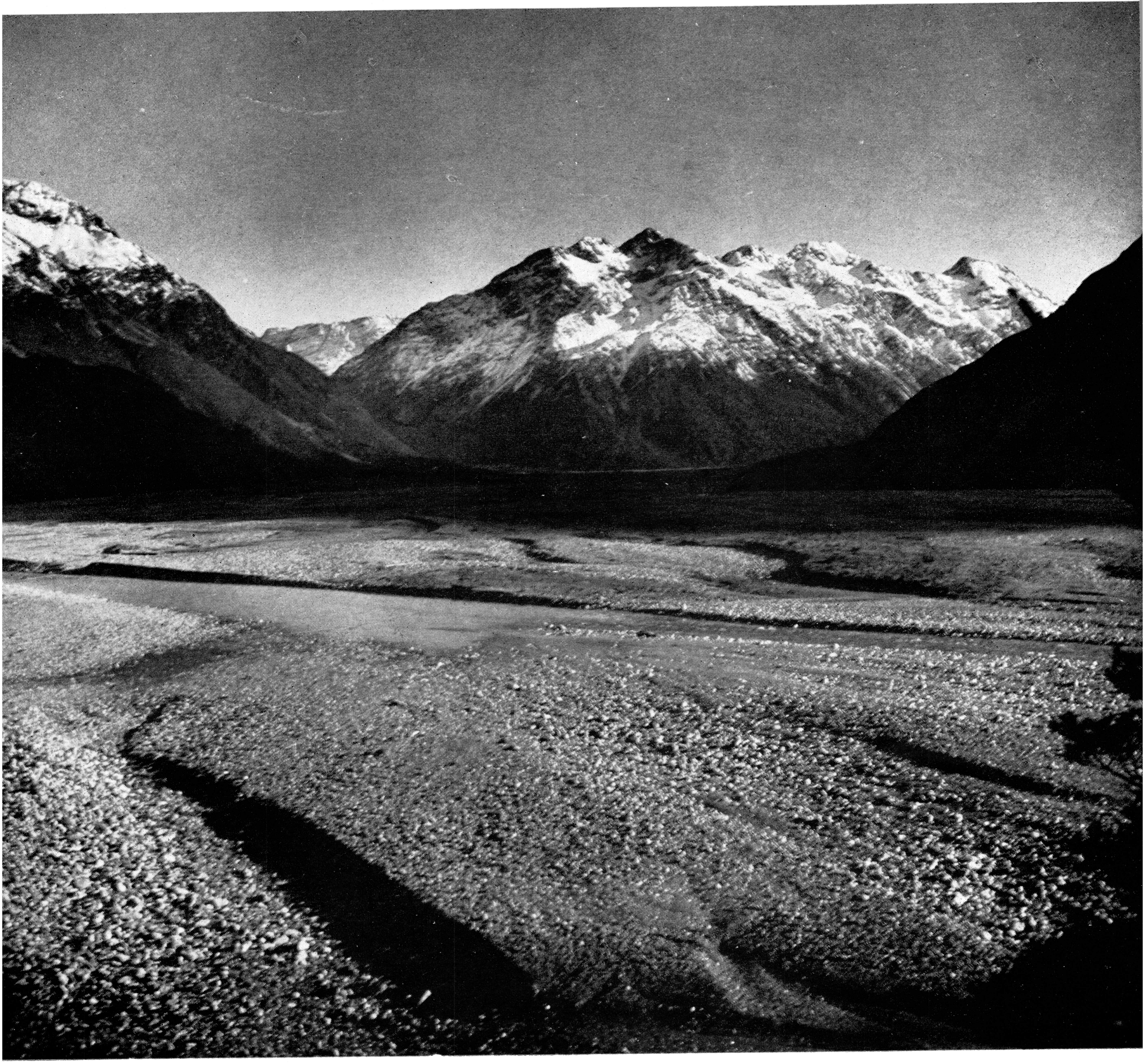
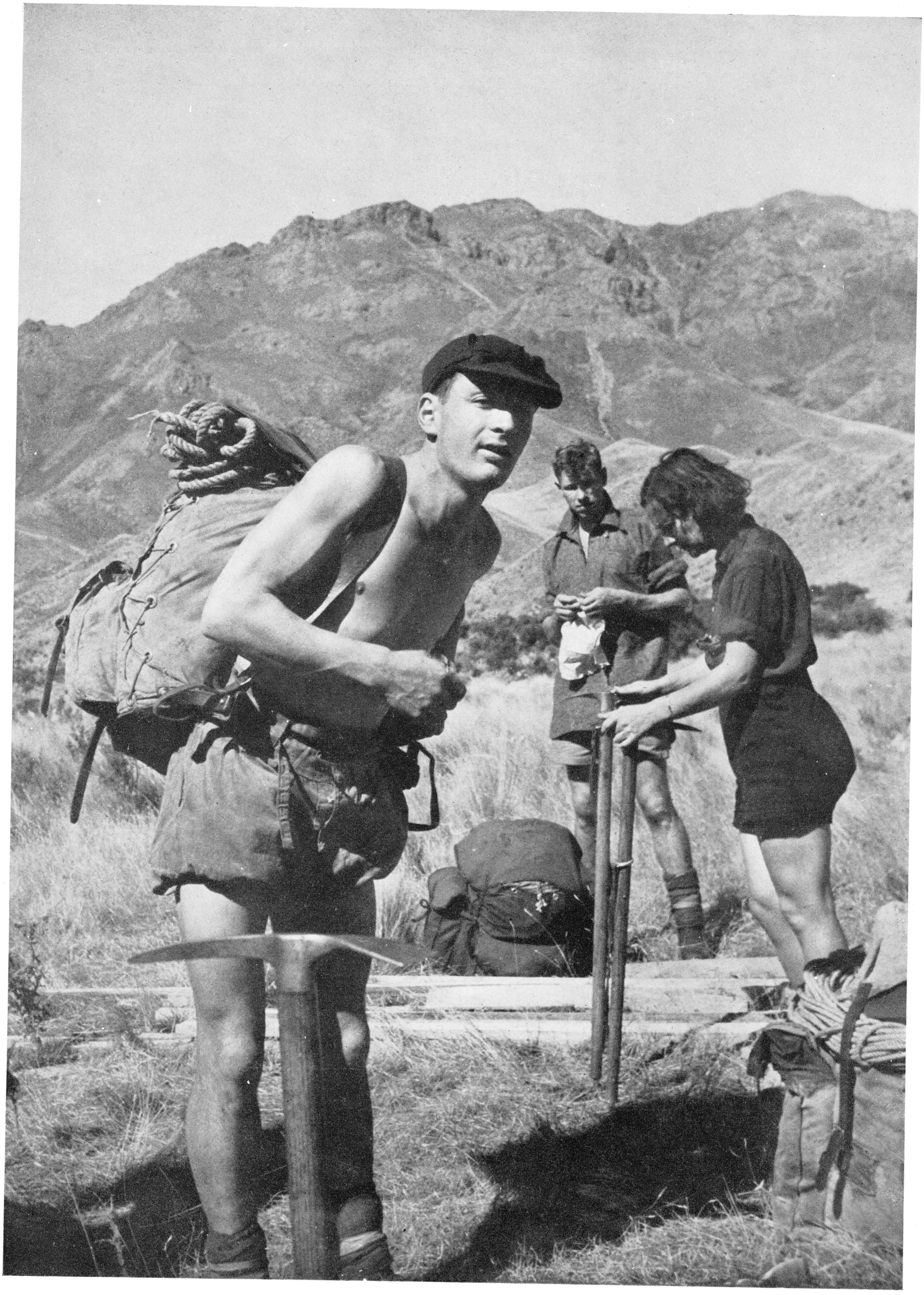
Waimakariri R.
Mt. COOK
CHRISTCHURCH
SOUTHERN ALPS
Rakaia R.
Rangitata R.
SOUTH ISLAND
DUNEDIN
1. Perth River
2. Havelock R.
3. Clyde R.
4. Arrowsmith Ra.
5. Whitcombe Pass
6. Arthur's Pass
7. Q. Charlotte Sd
8. Rimutaka Ra.

THE MOUNTAINS
THE BUSH & THE SEA

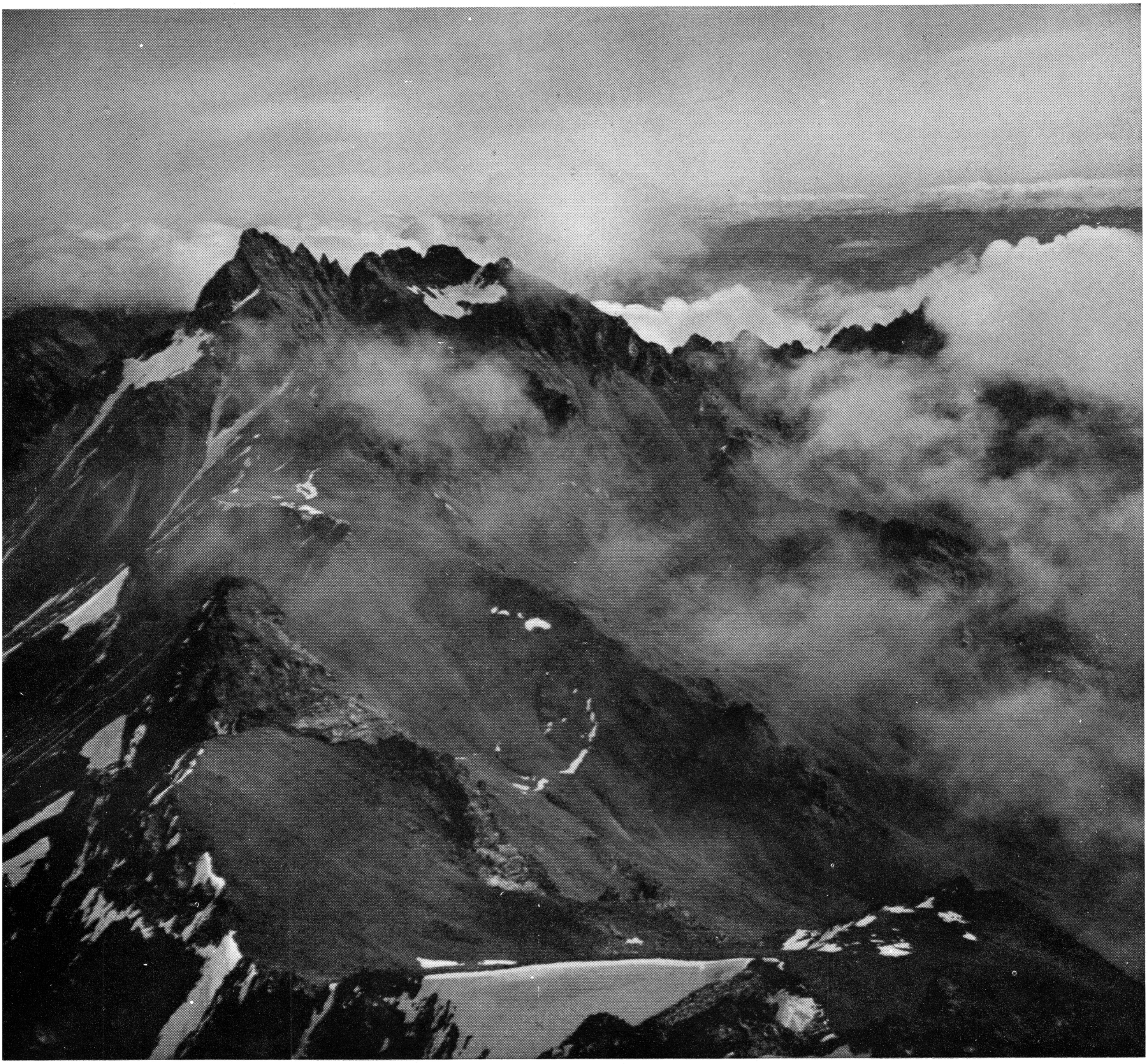
TO MY MOTHER



APPROACH THE MOUNTAINS *Mathias Valley*

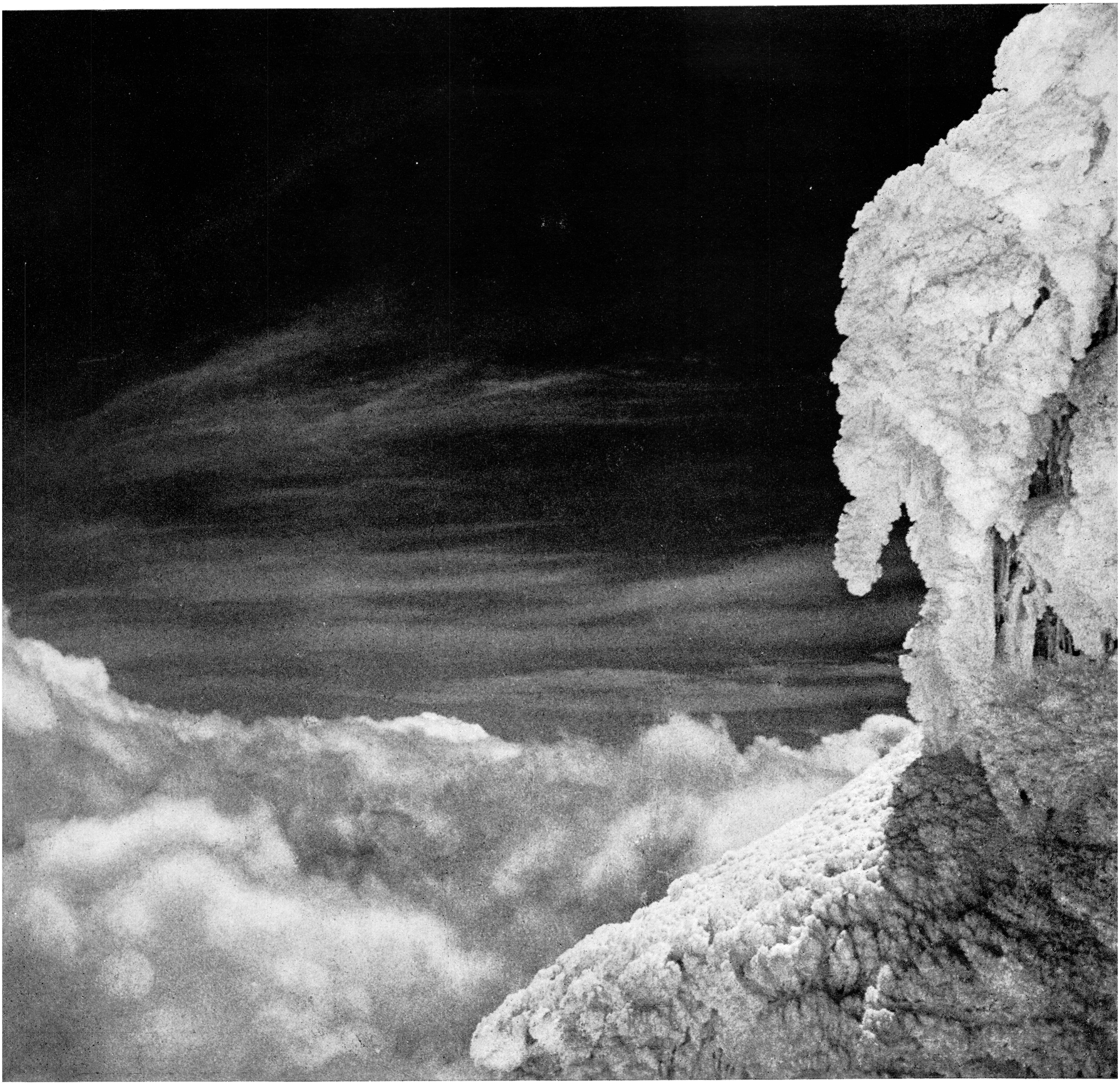


SWAG UP *Awatere Valley, Kaikoura Ranges*

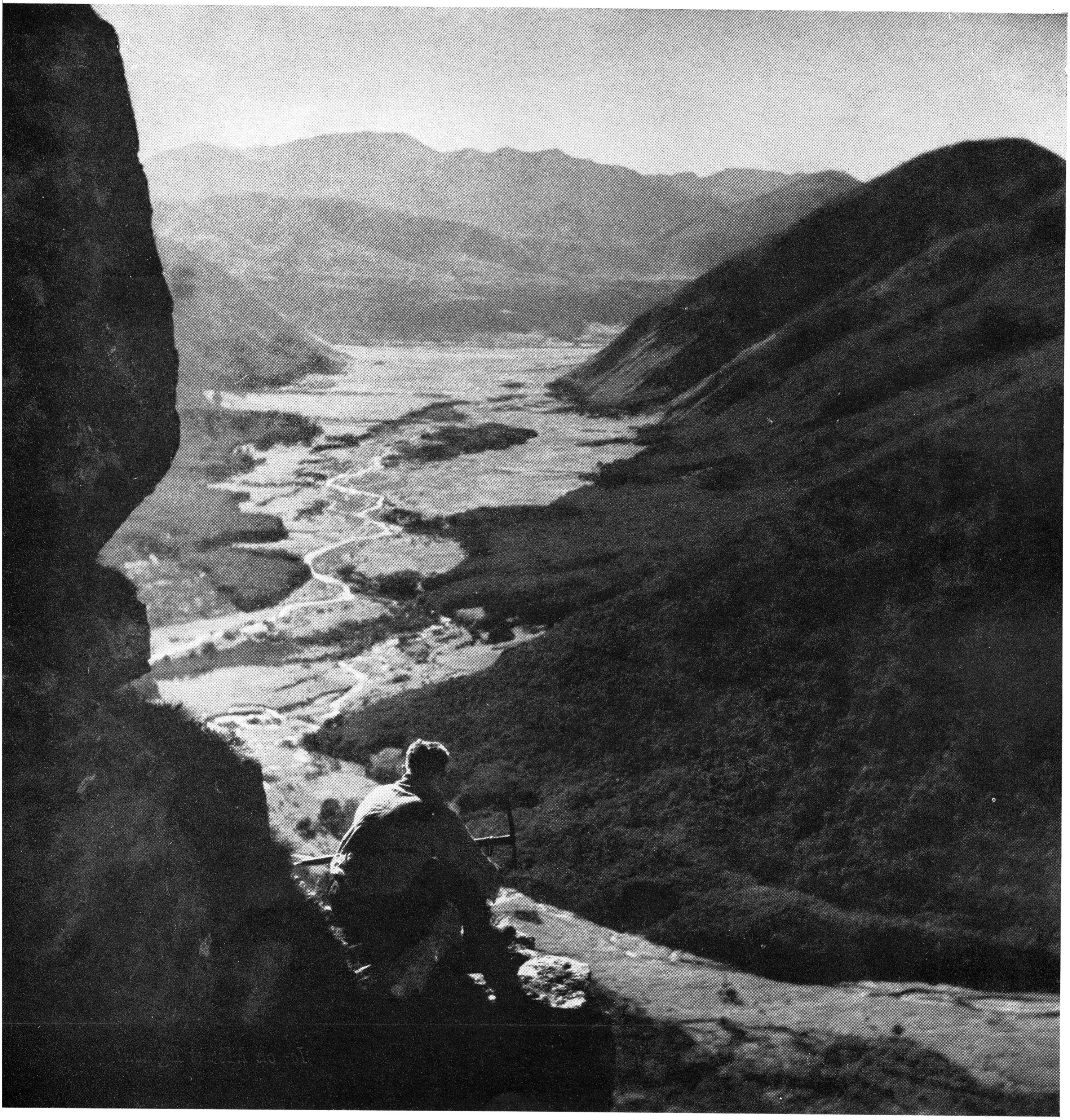


PEAK BELOW *Mount Alarm from Tapuaenuku, Kaikoura Ranges*

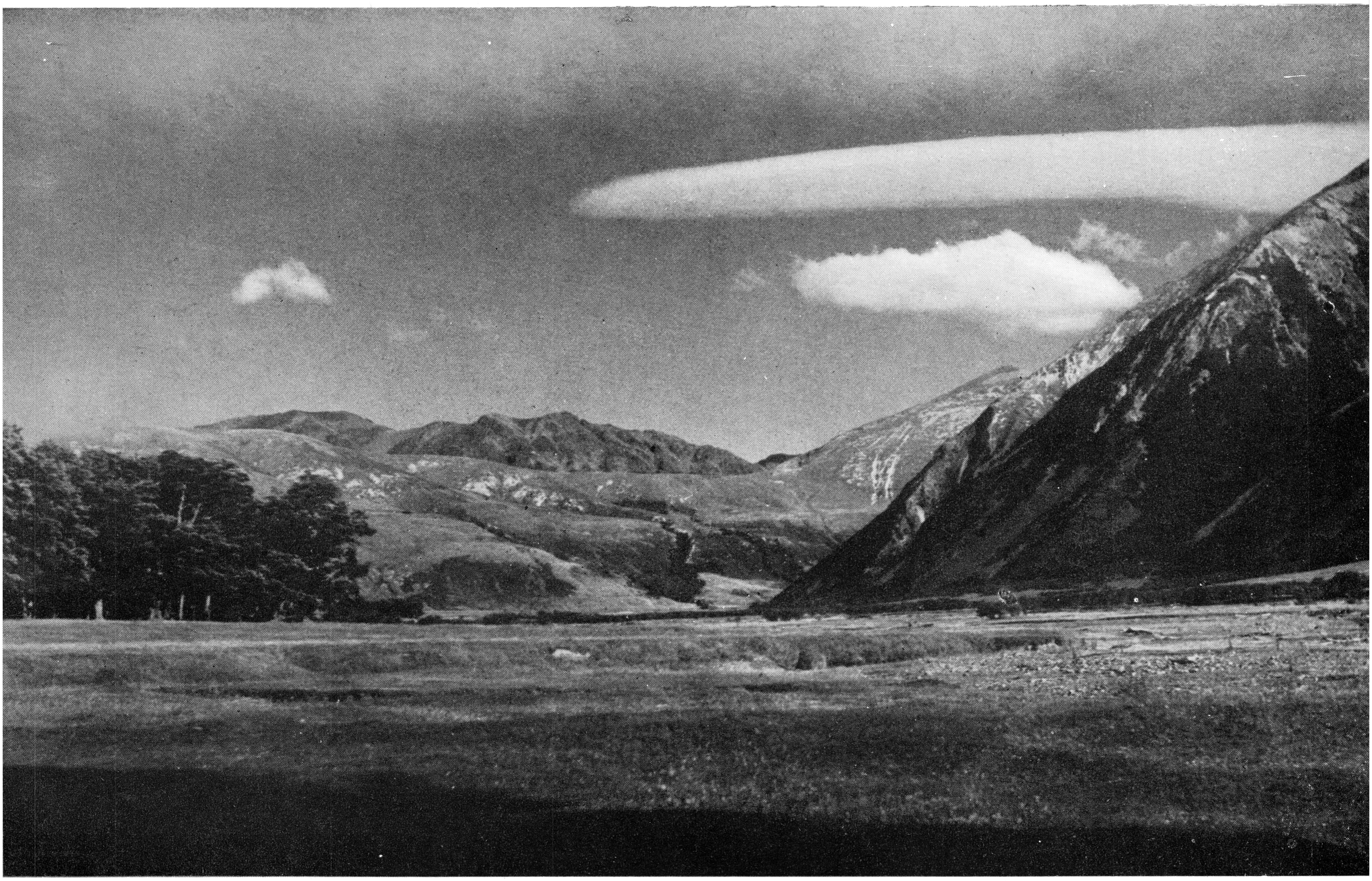
SATISFACTION *Awatere Valley, Kaikoura Ranges*



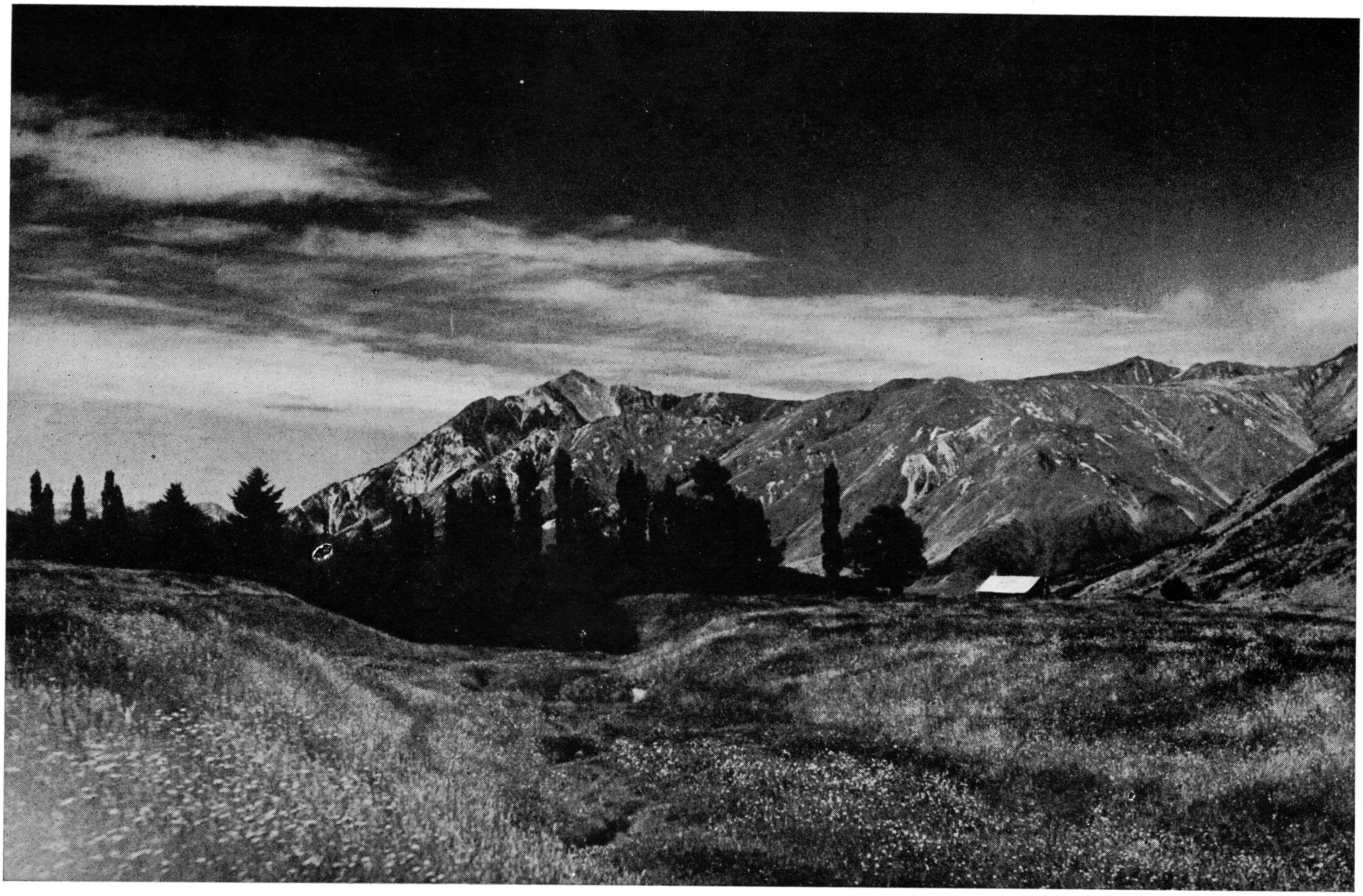
EXPECTATION *Ice on Mount Egmont*



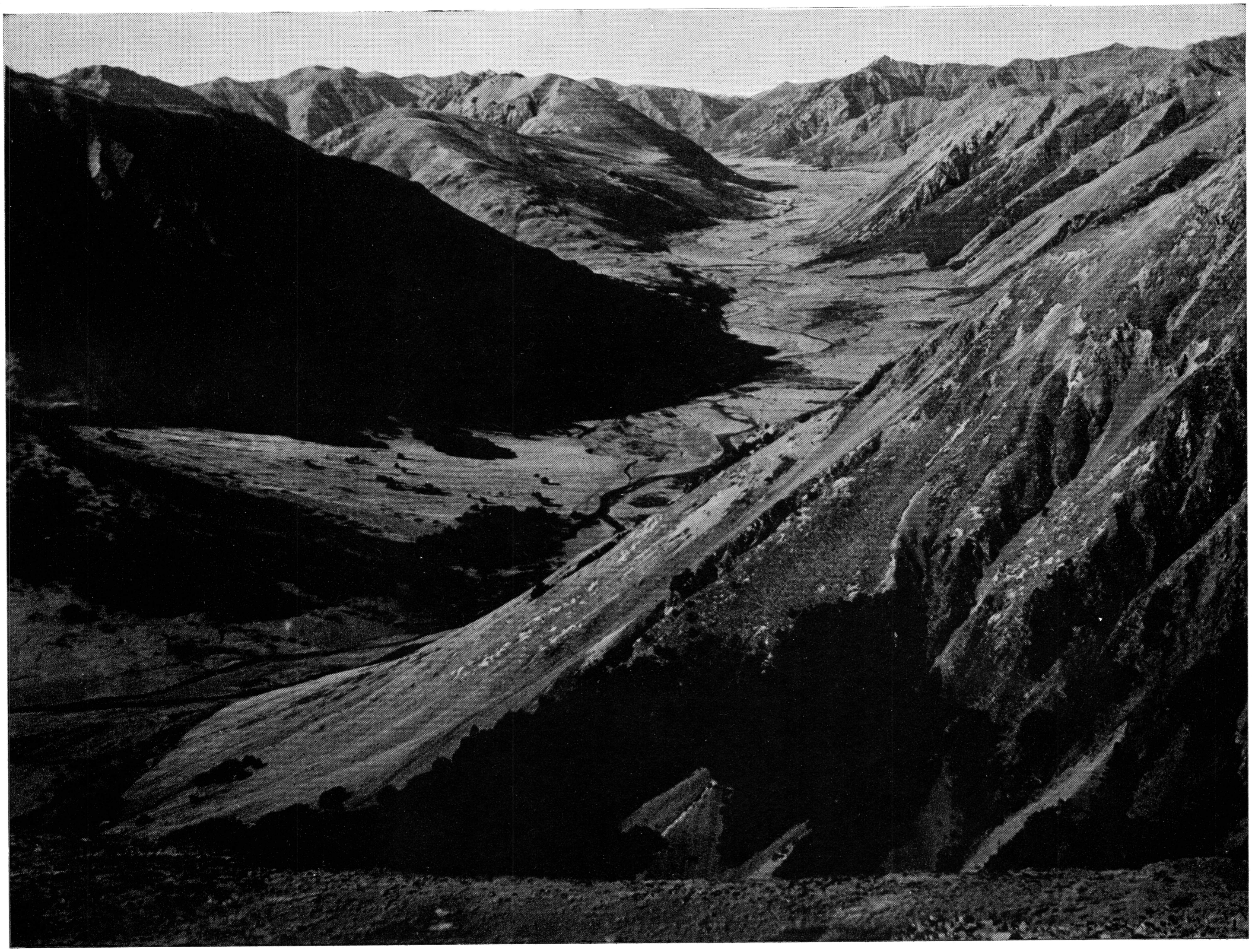
THE PROMISE OF EARLY MORNING *Faerie Queene, Spenser Ranges*



THE THREAT OF STORM CLOUDS *Down the Waiau, Spenser Ranges*

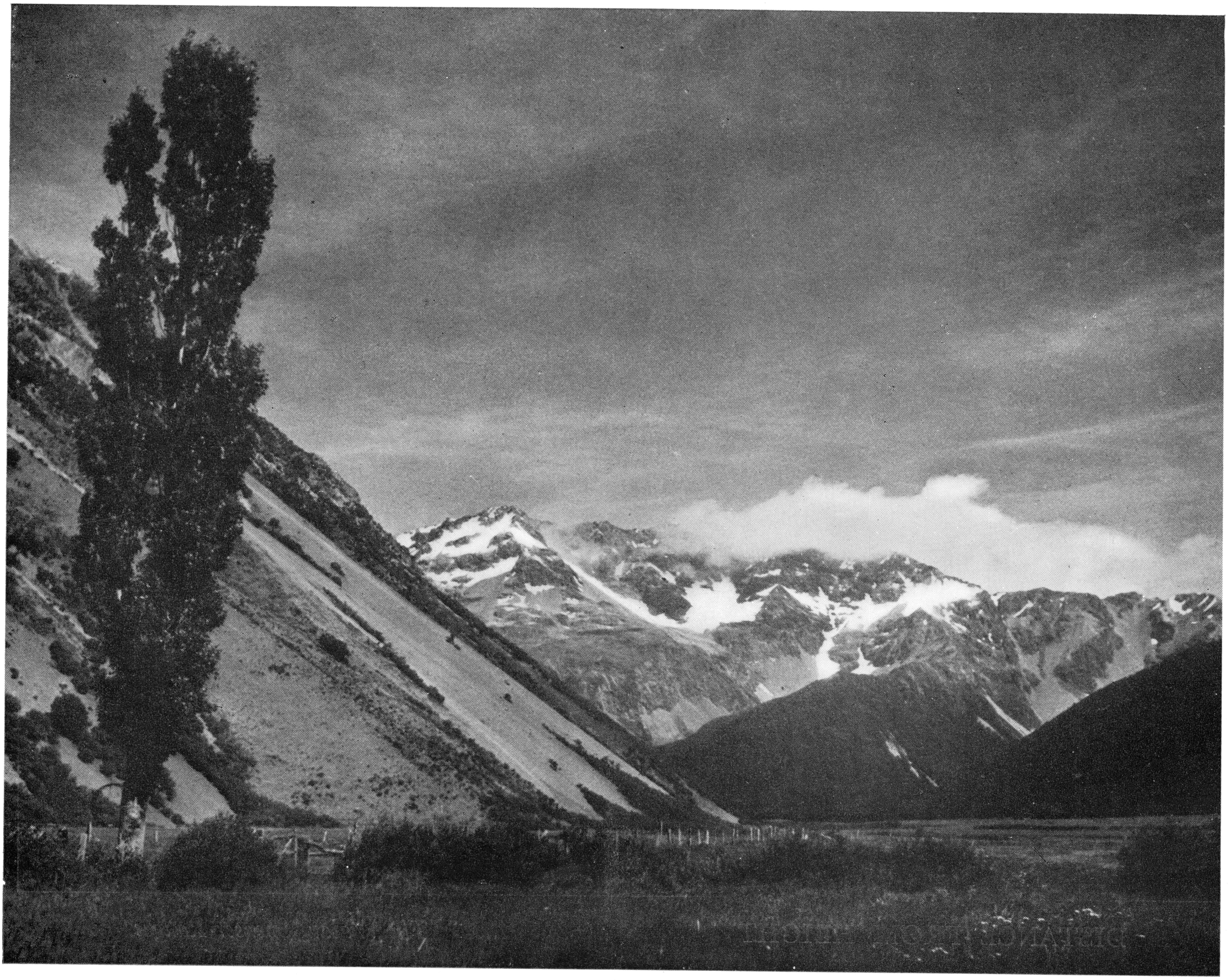


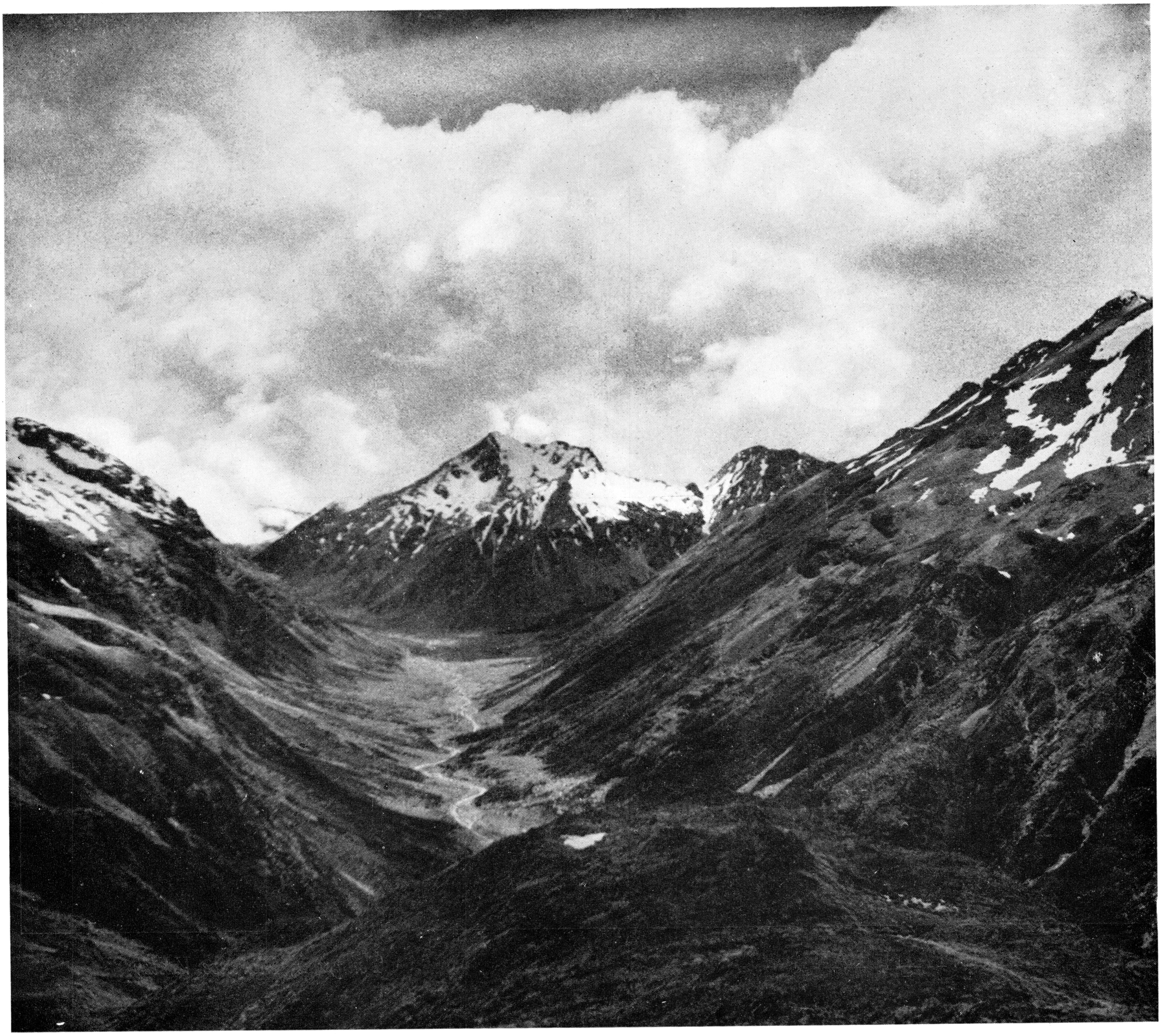
AT THE OUT STATION *The Ada, Spenser Ranges*



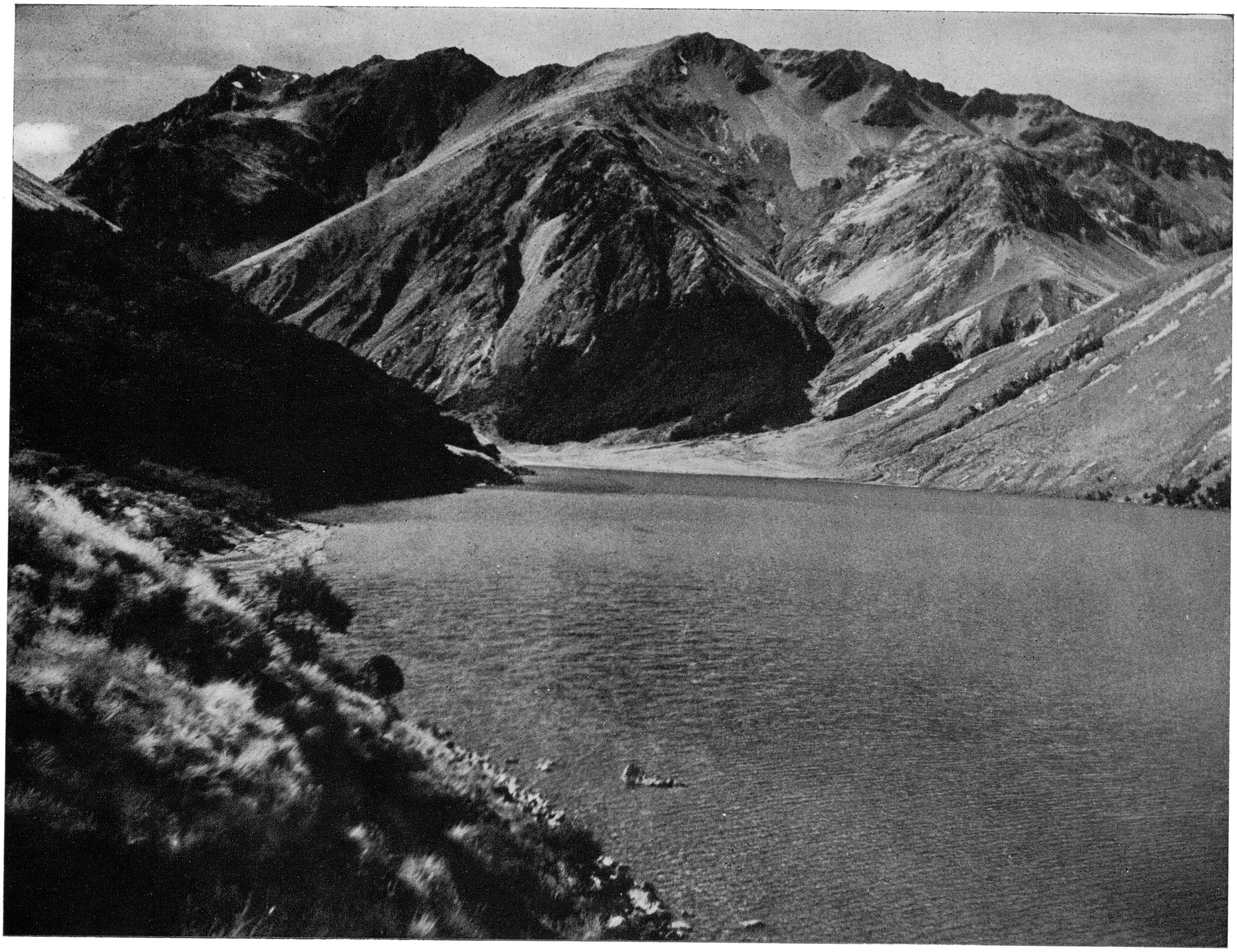
DISTANCE FROM HEIGHT *The Waiau, Spenser Ranges*

HOMESTEAD HORIZON *Faerie Queene, Spenser Ranges*

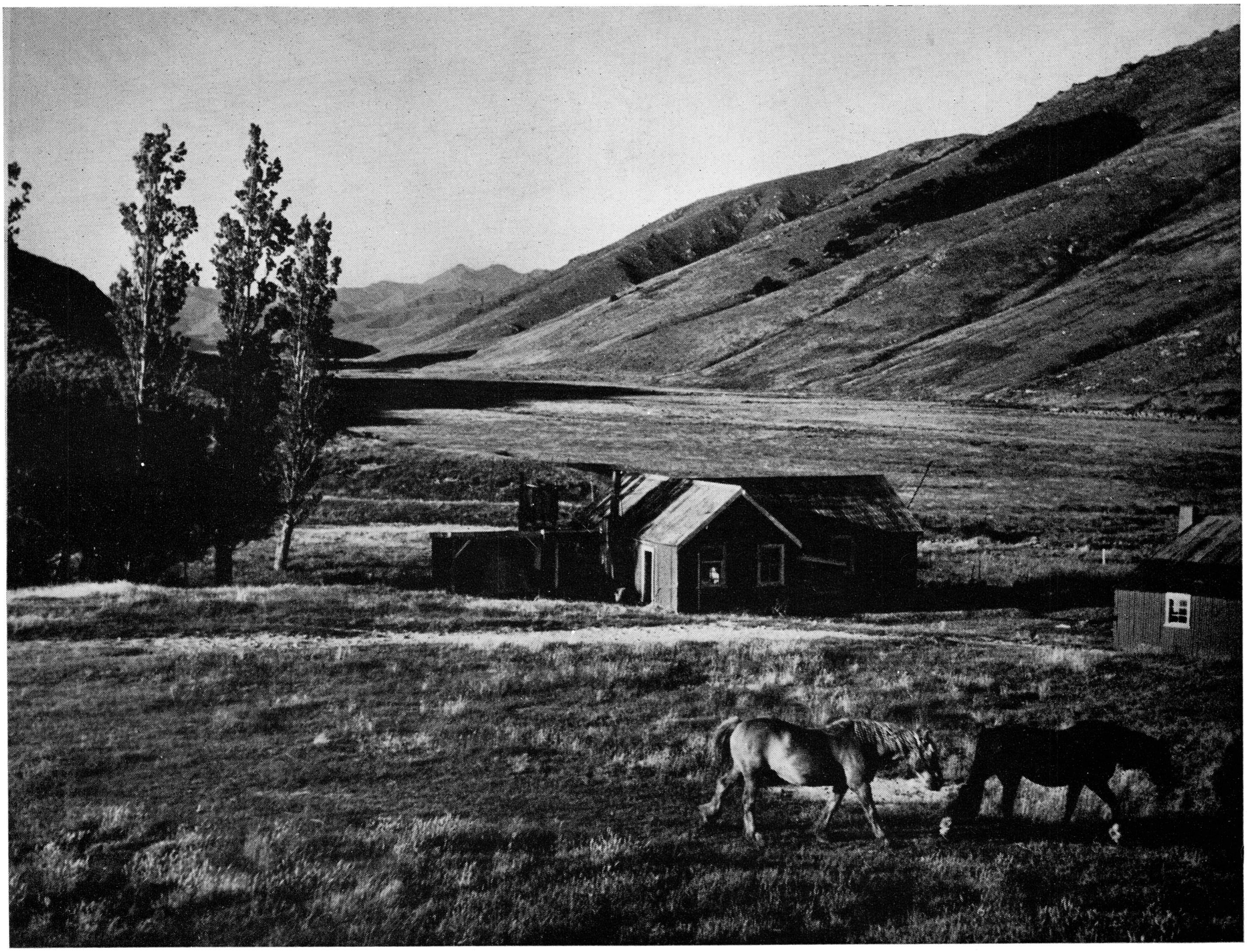




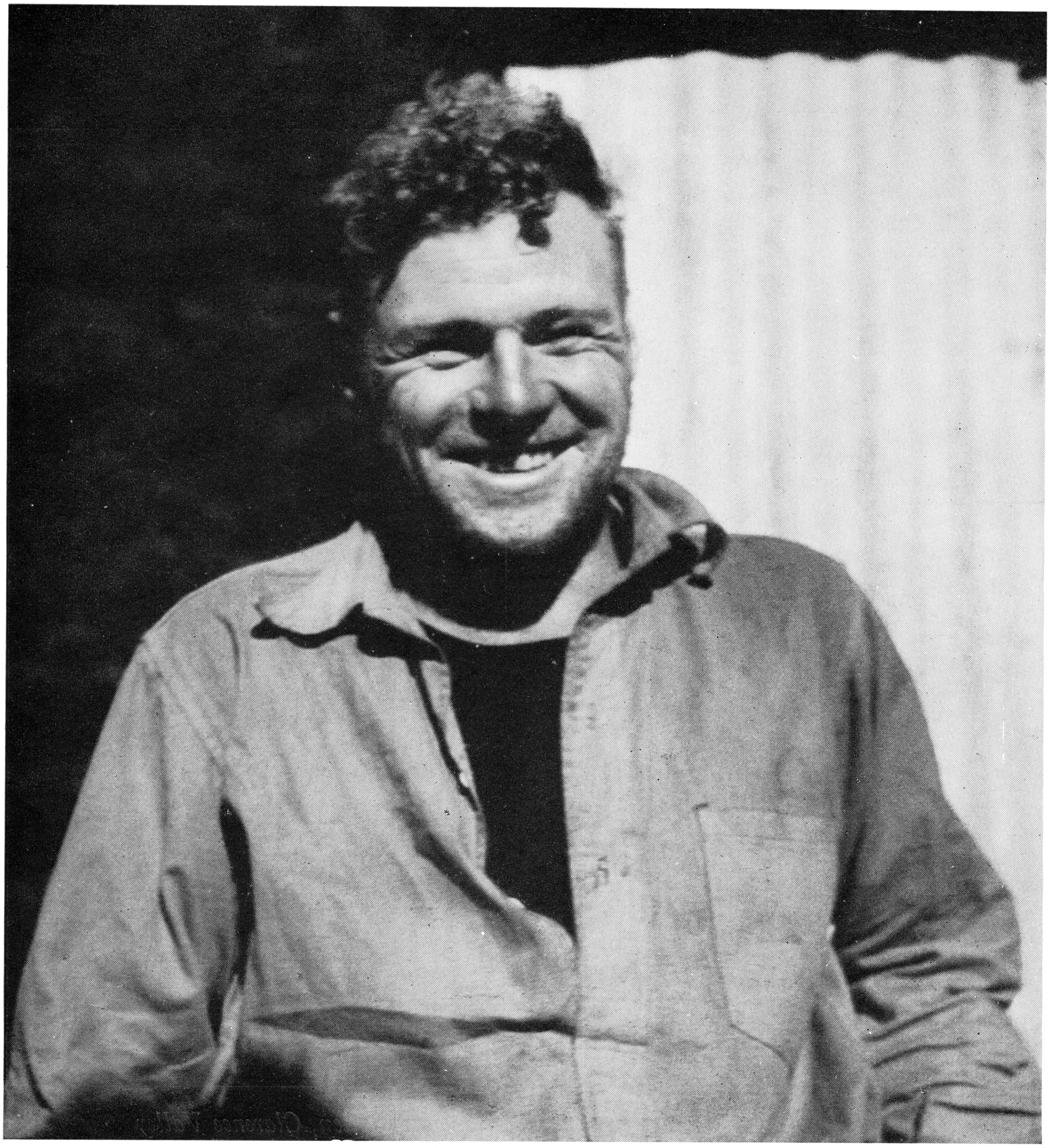
BARONETER RISING *Falling Mountain, Edwards Valley*



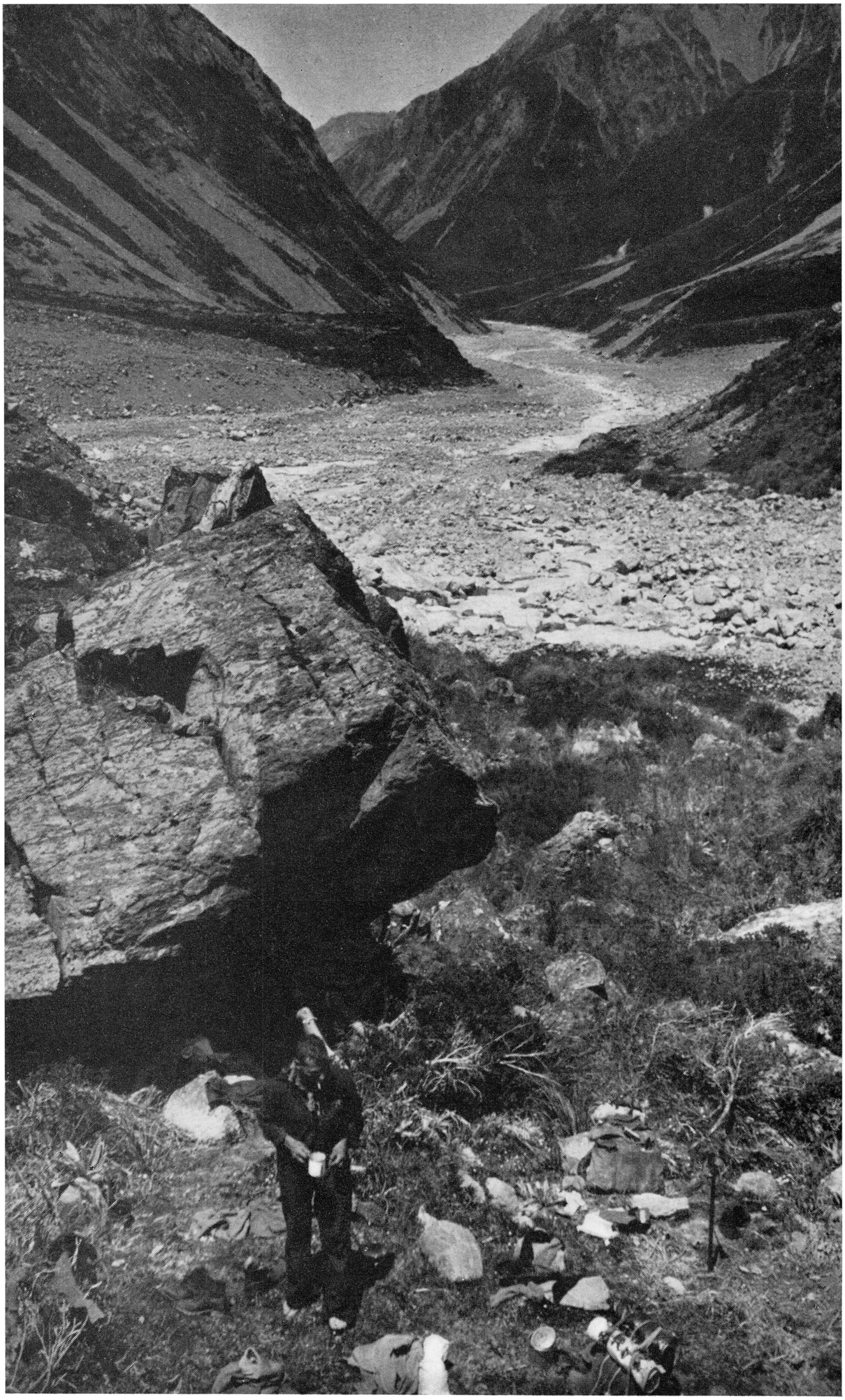
MOUNTAIN LAKE *Tennyson, Clarence Valley*



BUNK HOUSE *St. James Station, Clarence Valley*

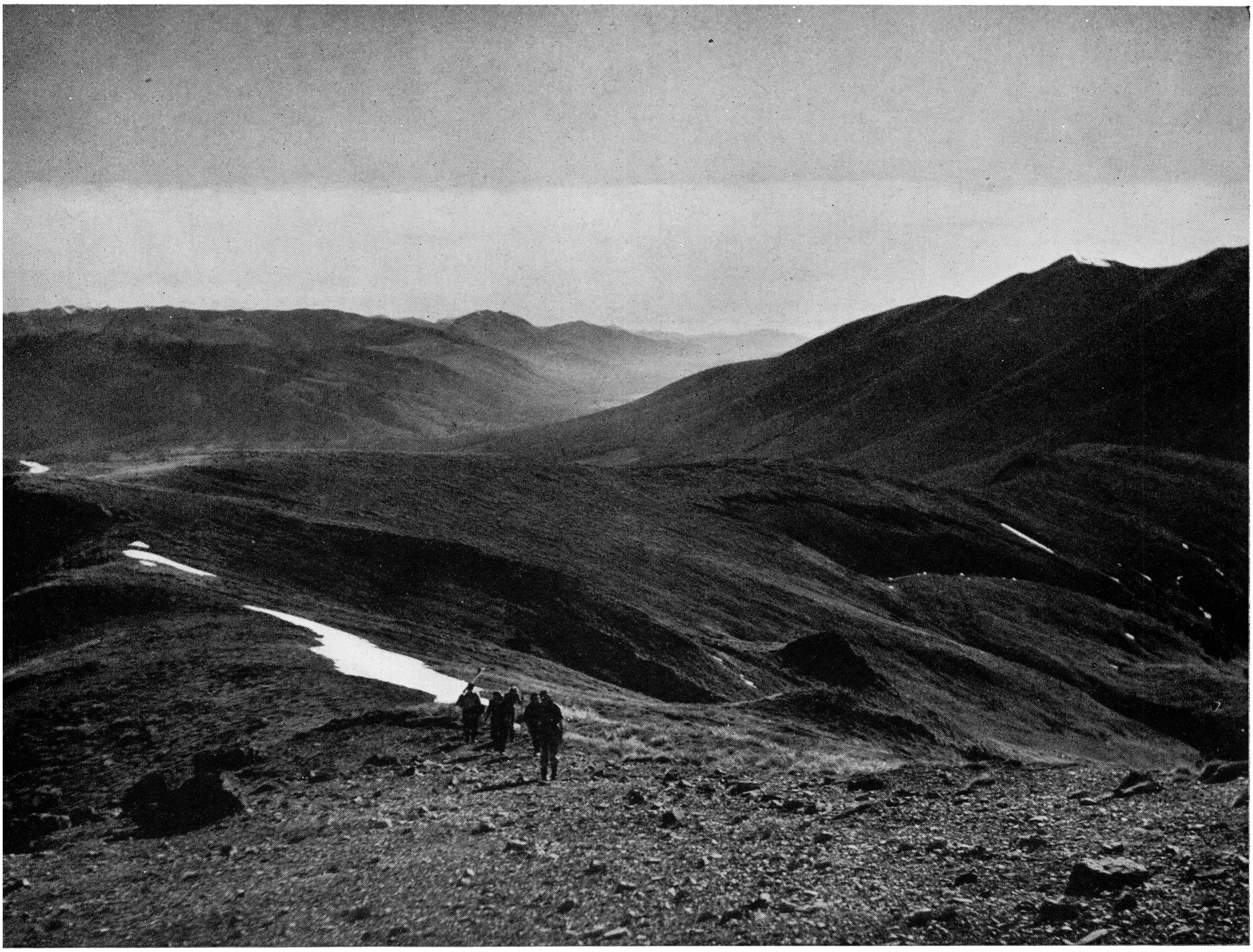


DEER KILLER *Waiau Valley, Spenser Ranges*

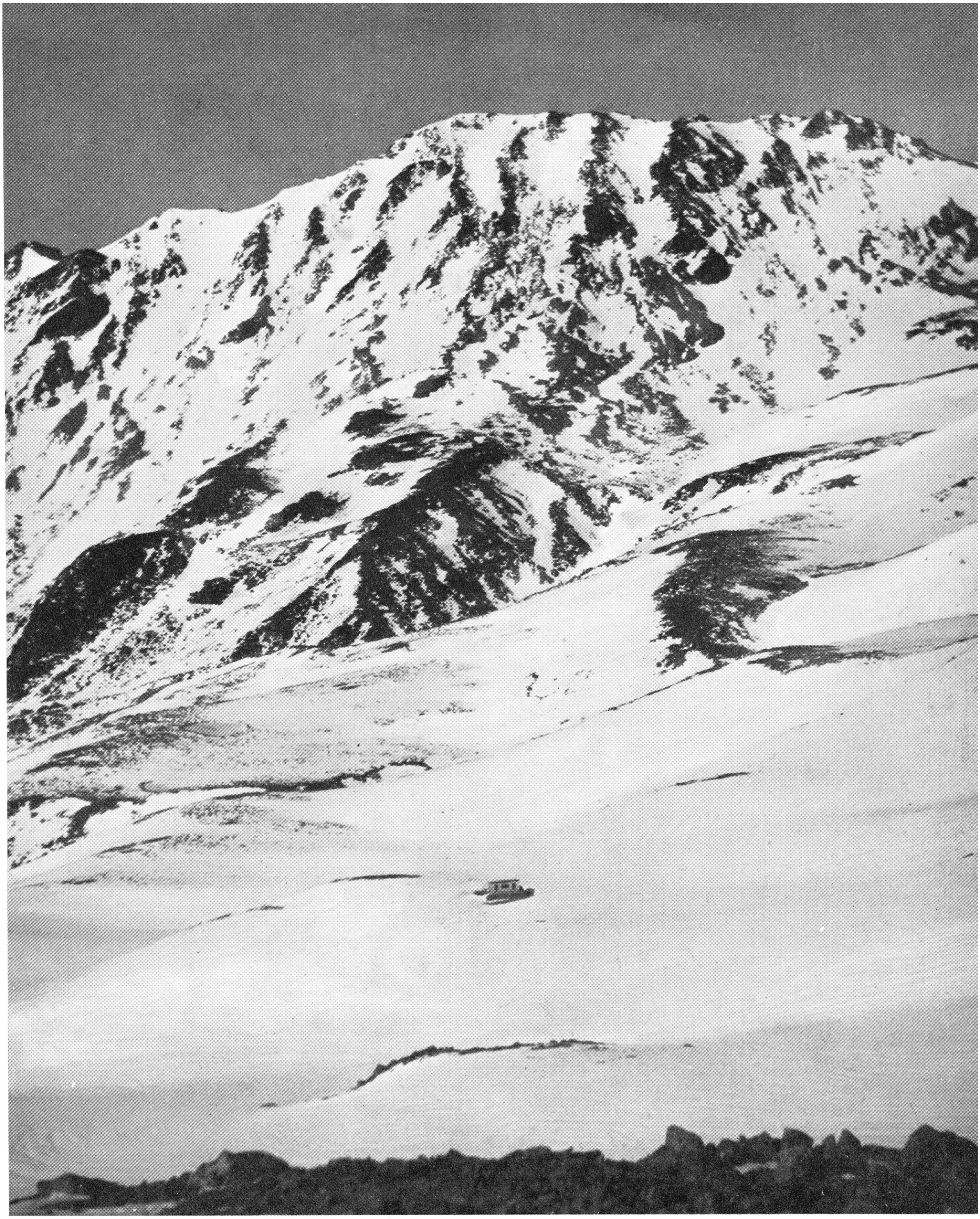


CHAMOIS
COUNTRY

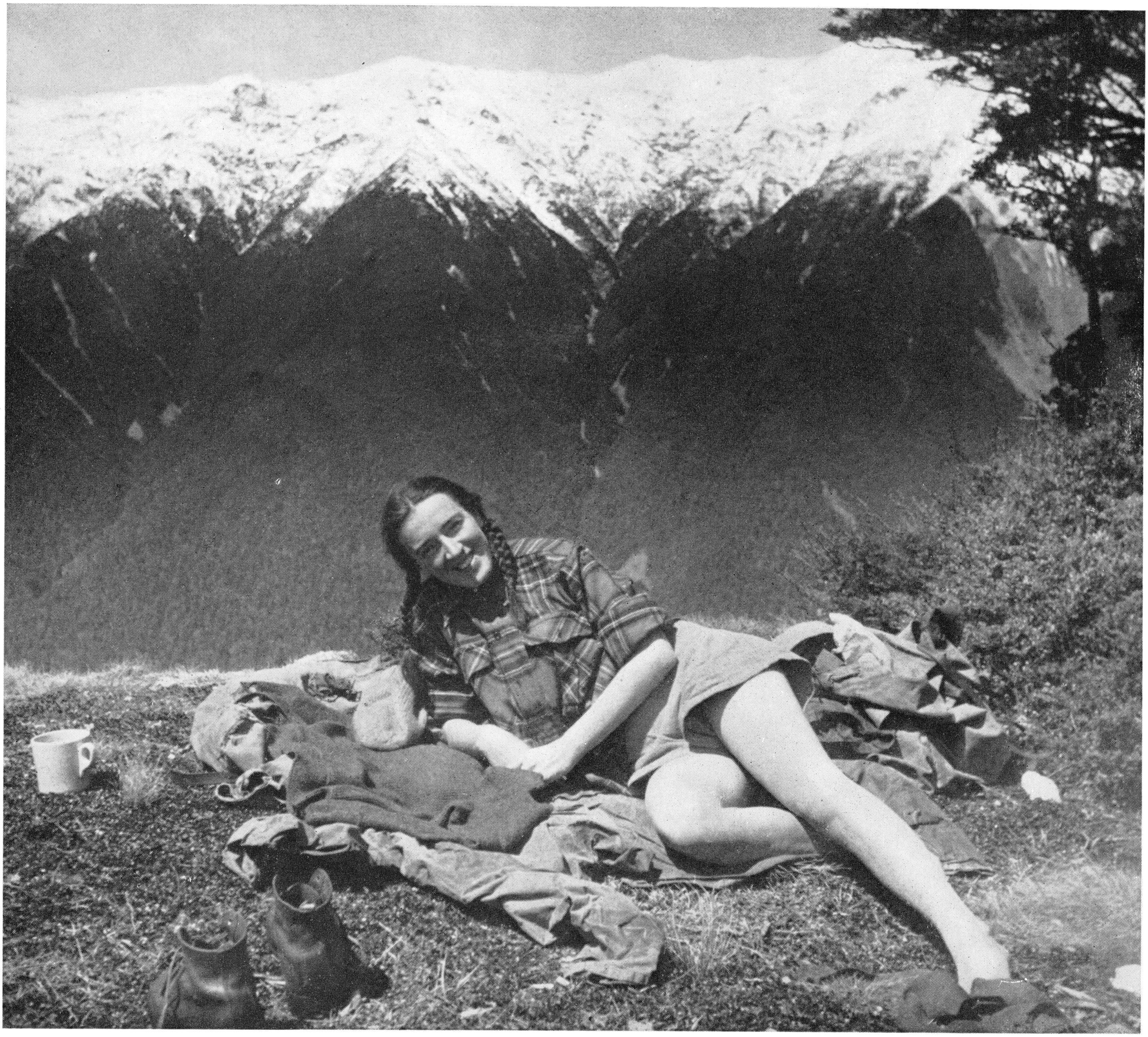
Clyde Valley, Rangitata



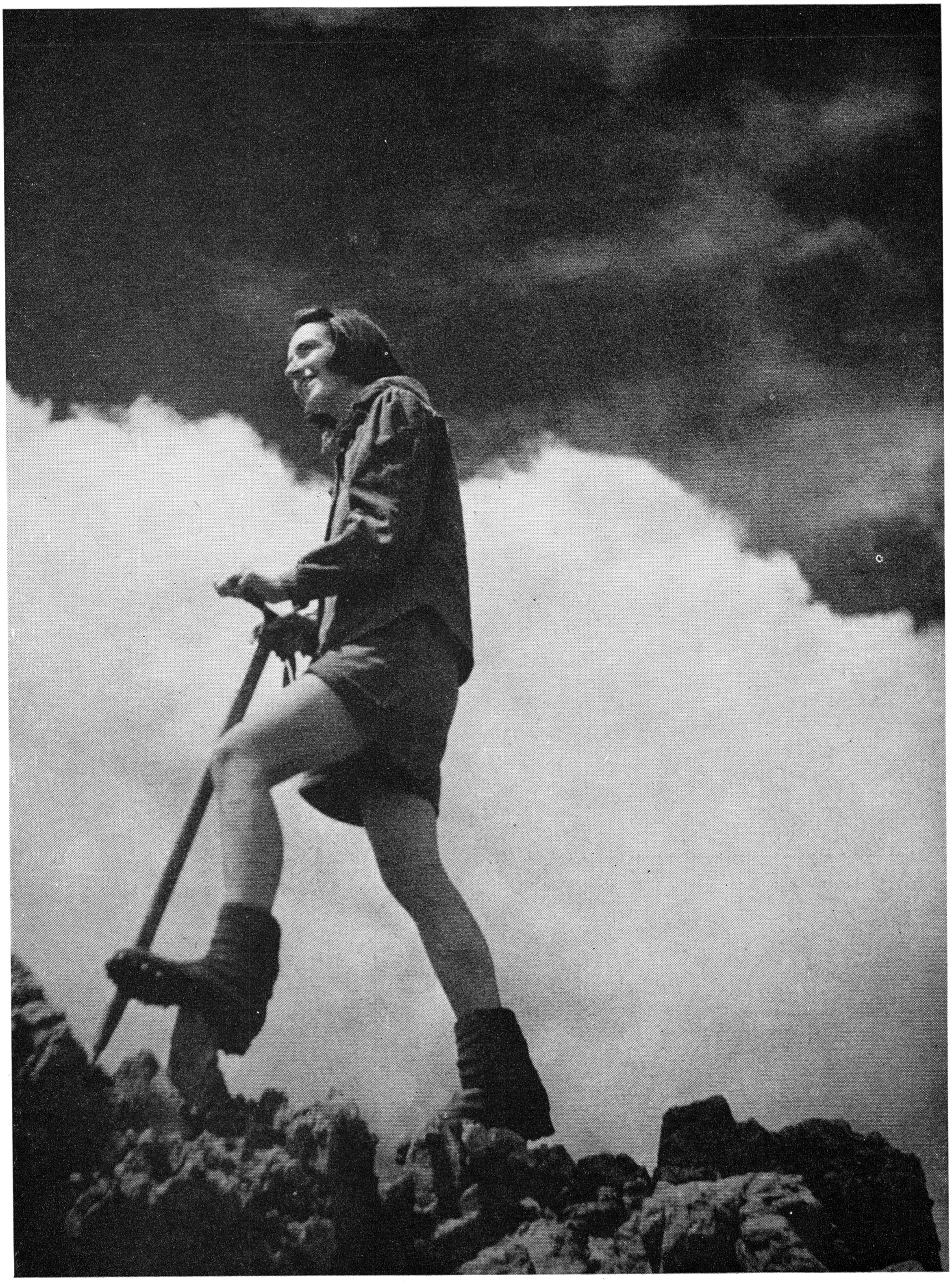
HAZE DISSOLVING *Down the Wairau*



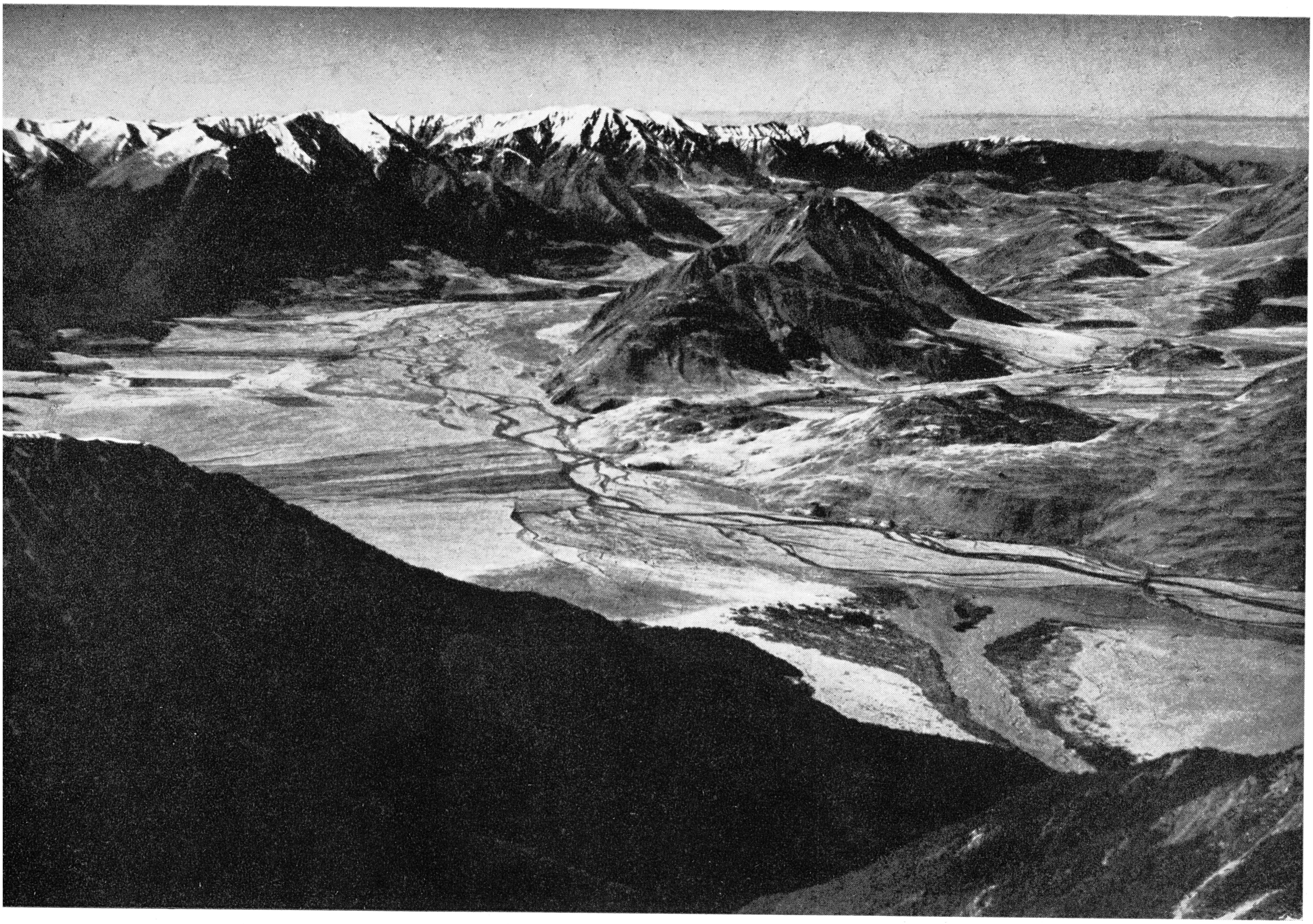
SPRING SNOW MELTING *Mount Robert, Lake Rotoiti*



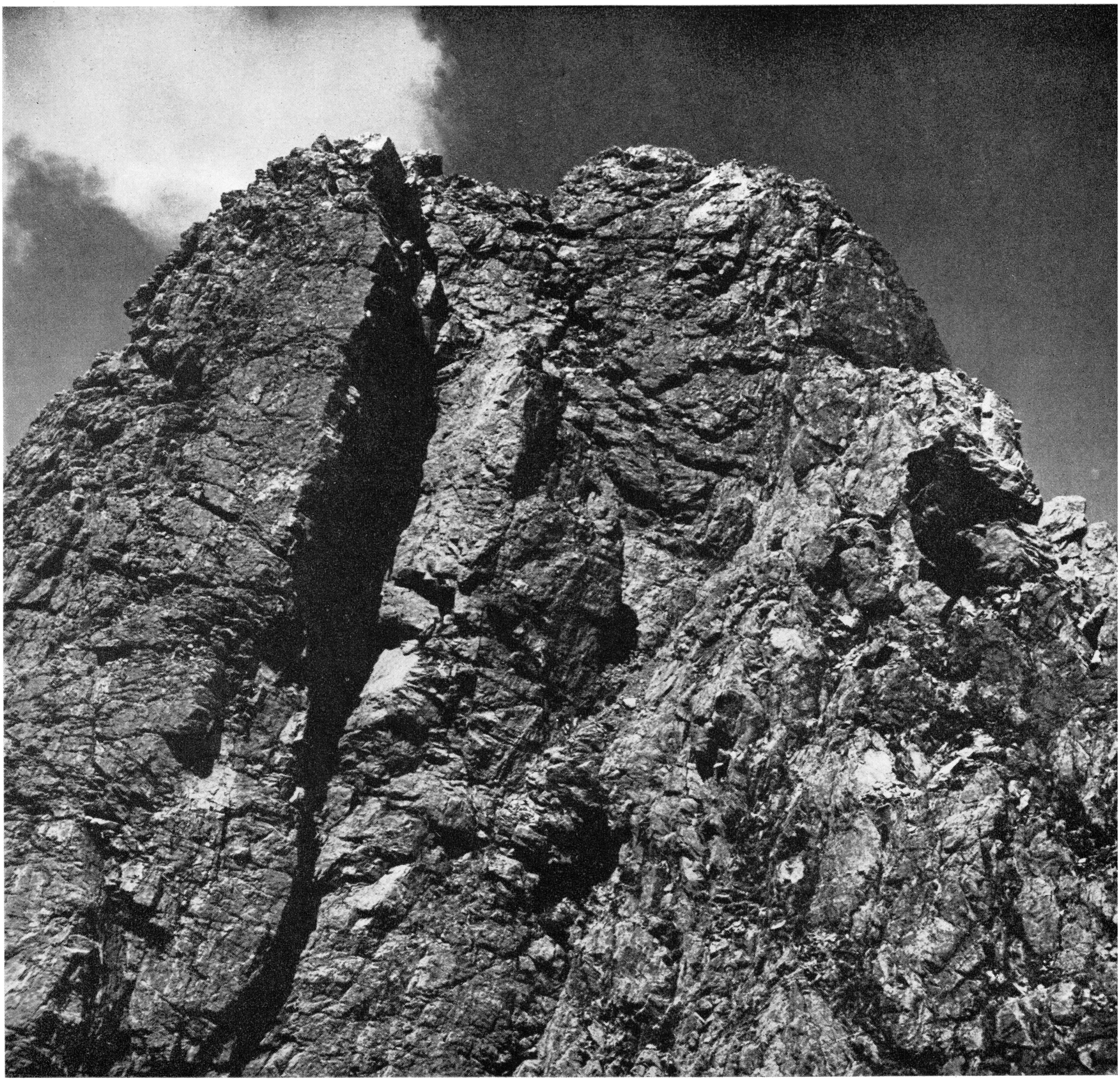
SKI NOVICE *Mount Robert, Lake Rotoiti*



ON THE RIDGE *Mount Williams, Edwards Valley*

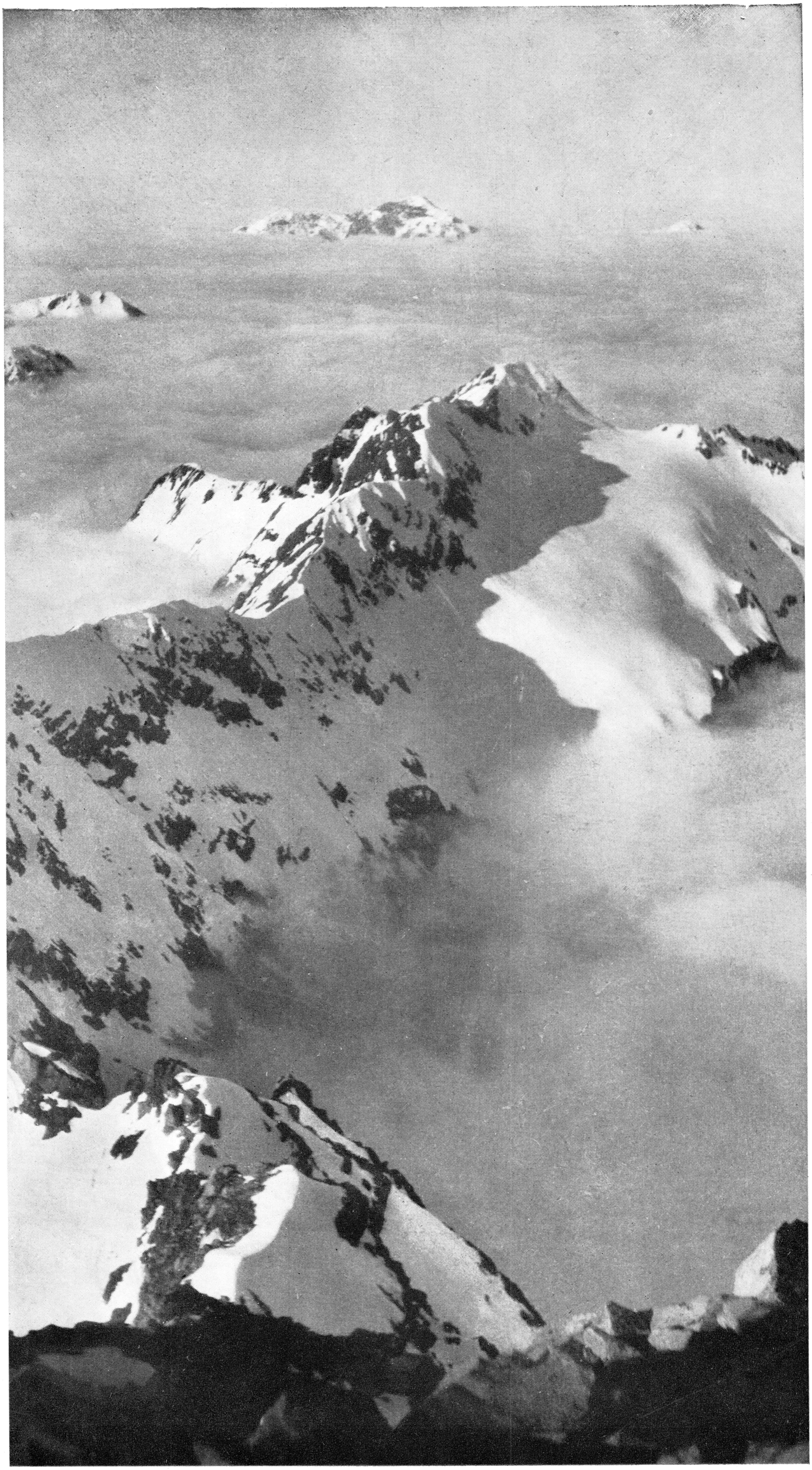


FACE OF LAND *Cass, Waimakariri, from the Dome*



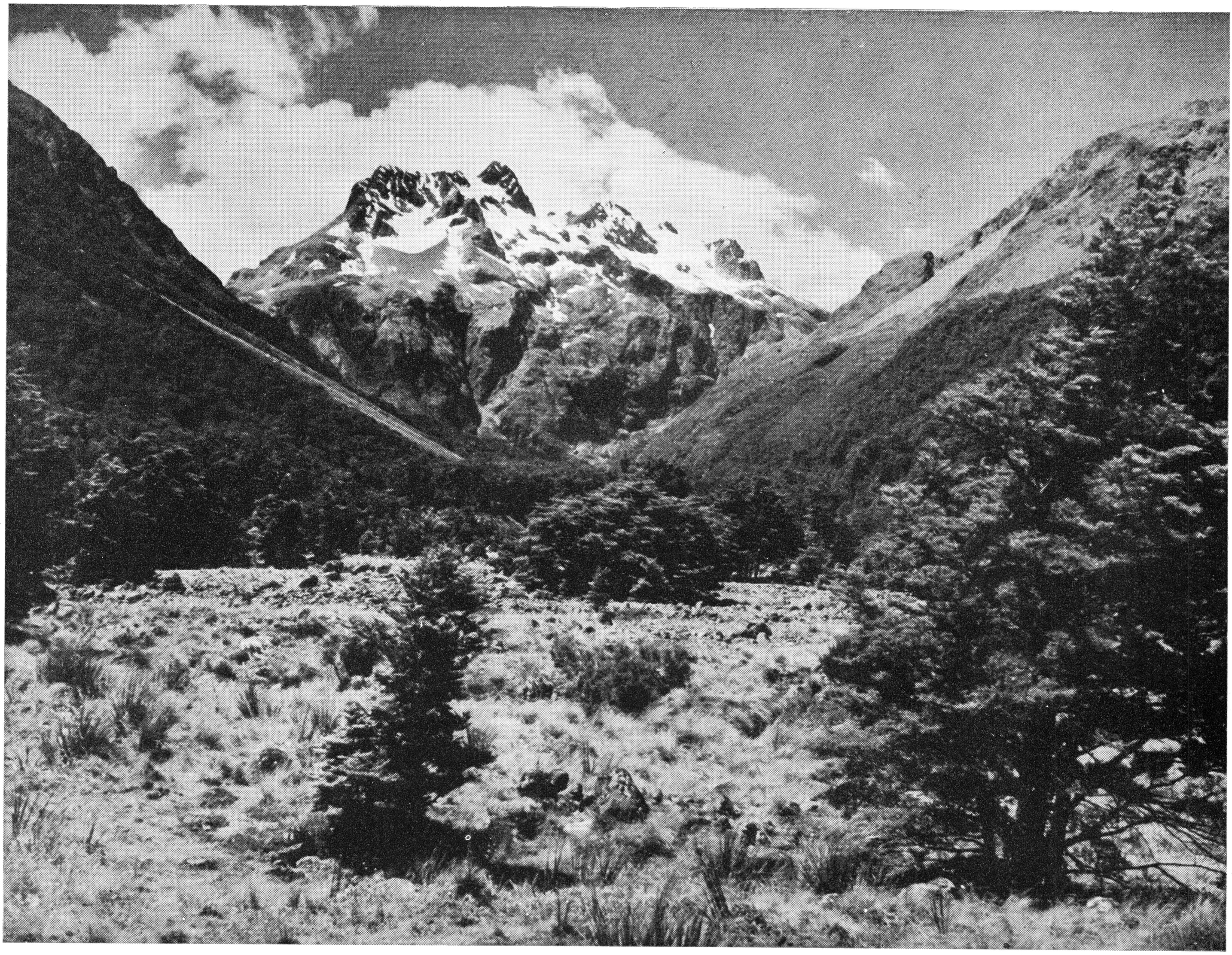
FACE OF ROCK *Aicken Ridge, Arthur's Pass*

MID-WINTER DESIGN *Goldney Ridge, Mount Rolleston*

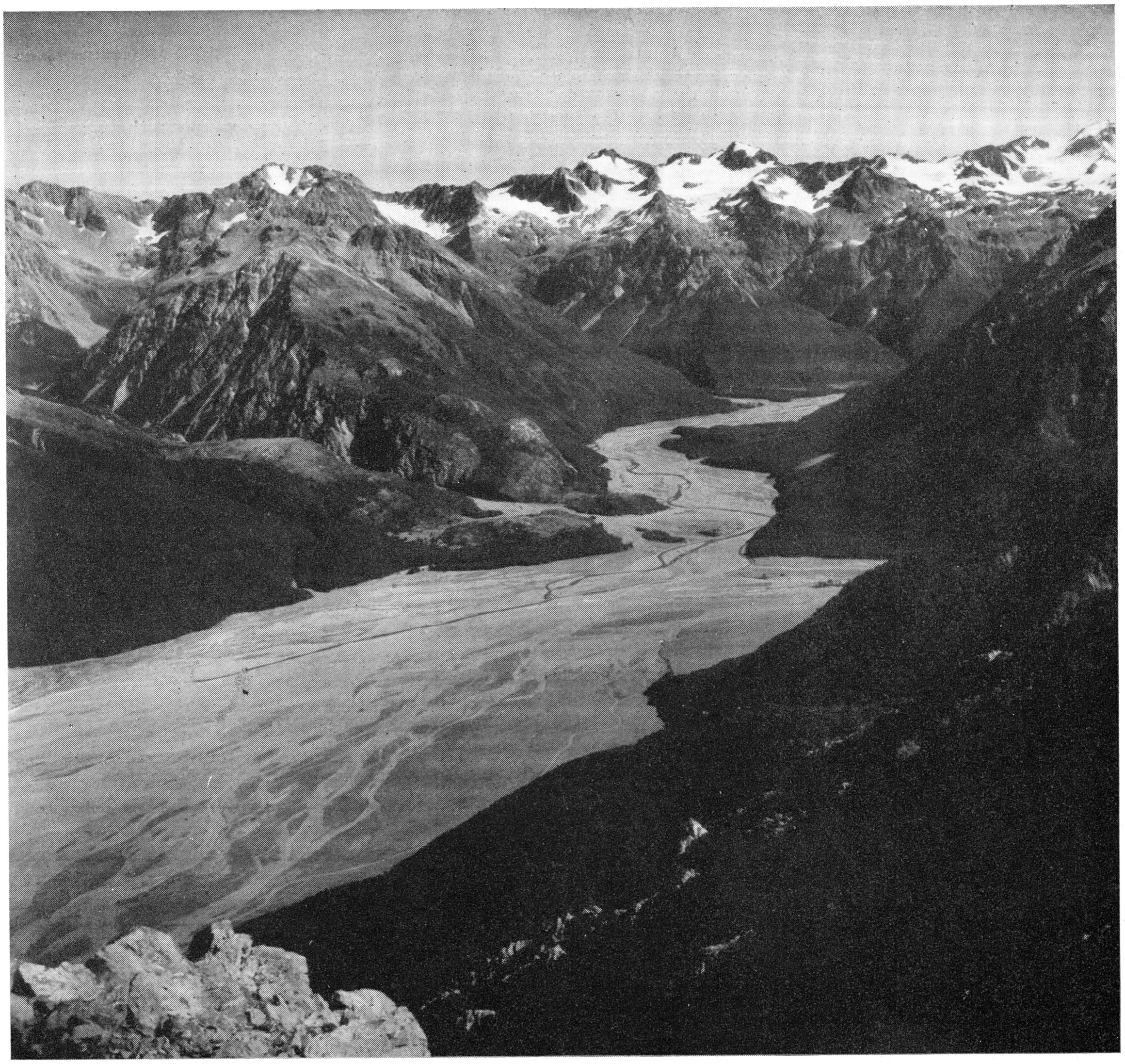


EARLY SUMMER PATTERN

Mount Philistine from Mount Rolleston

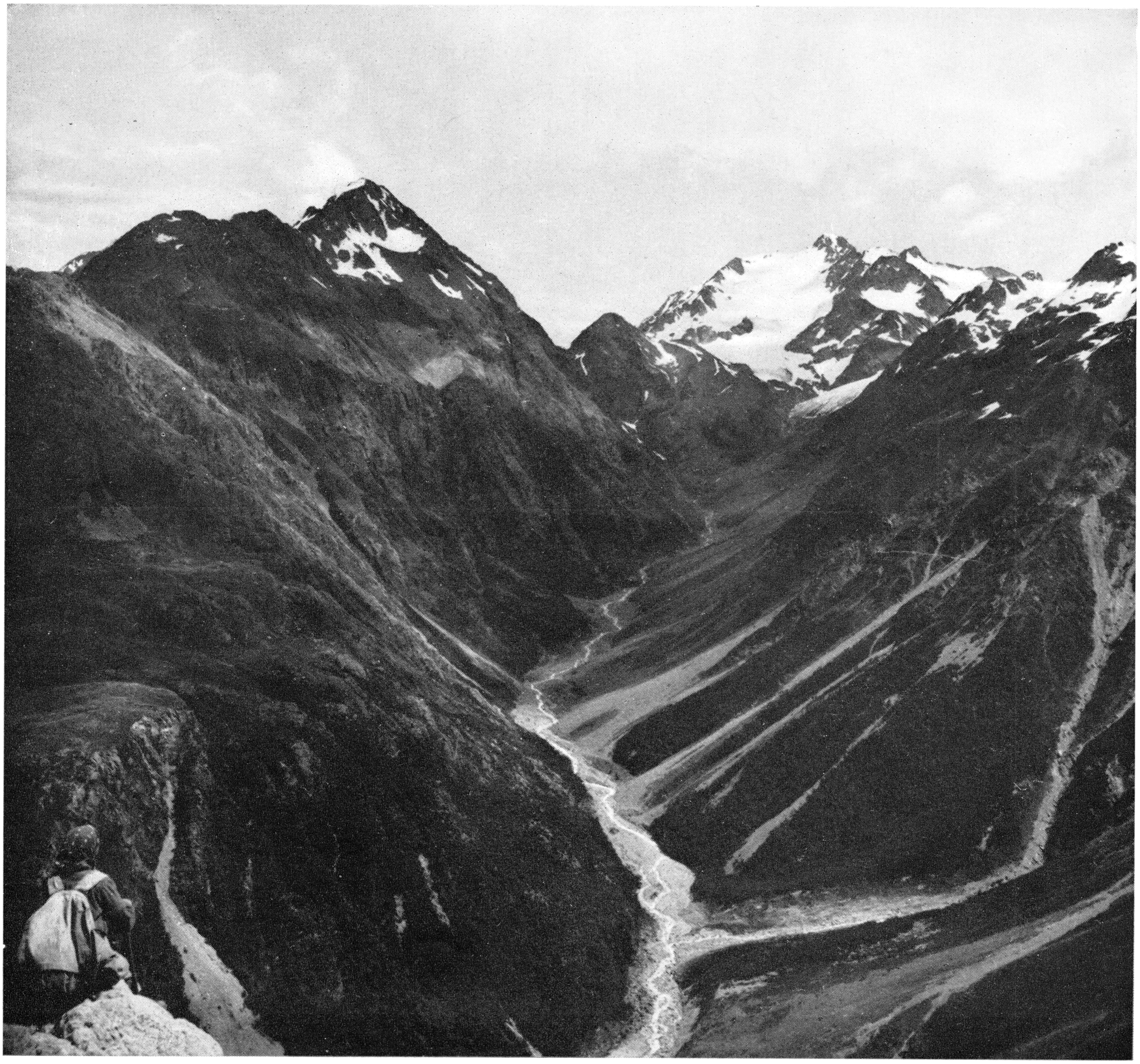


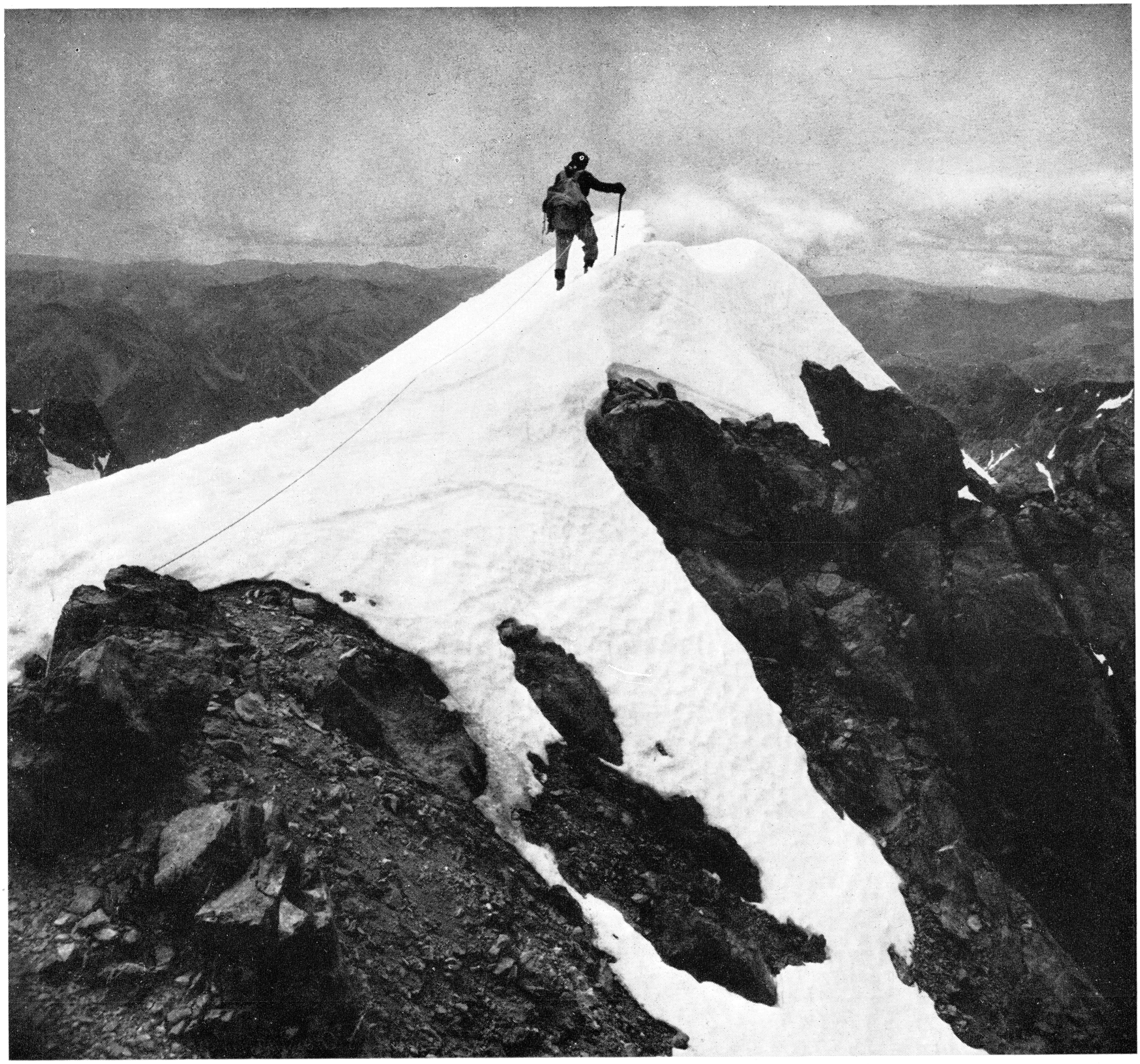
FULL VIEW *Carrington Peak from the Waimakariri*



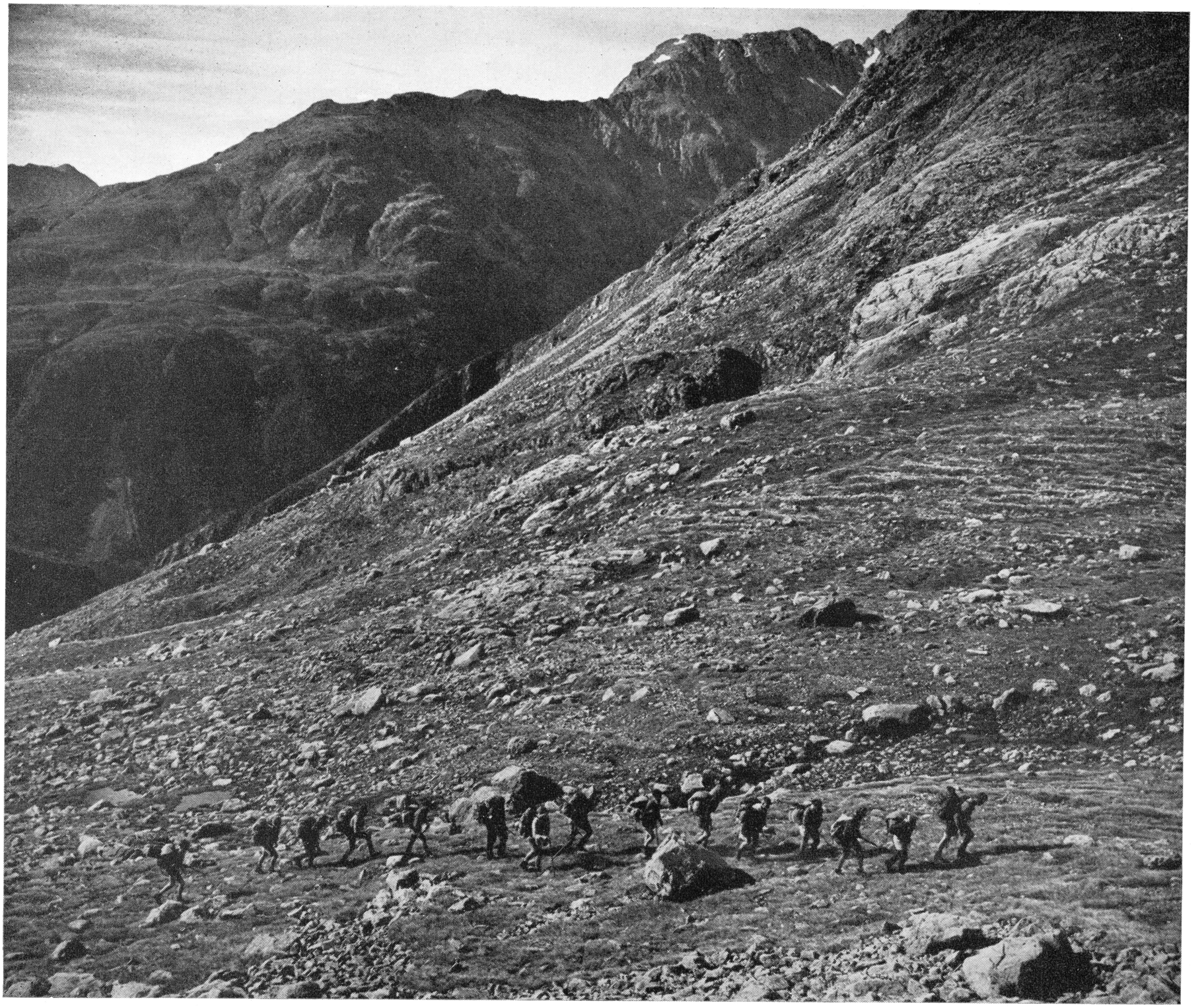
PATH TO PEAKS *Waimakariri from Bealey Range*

OBJECTIVE *Mount Murchison from the Campbell Range, Waimakariri*

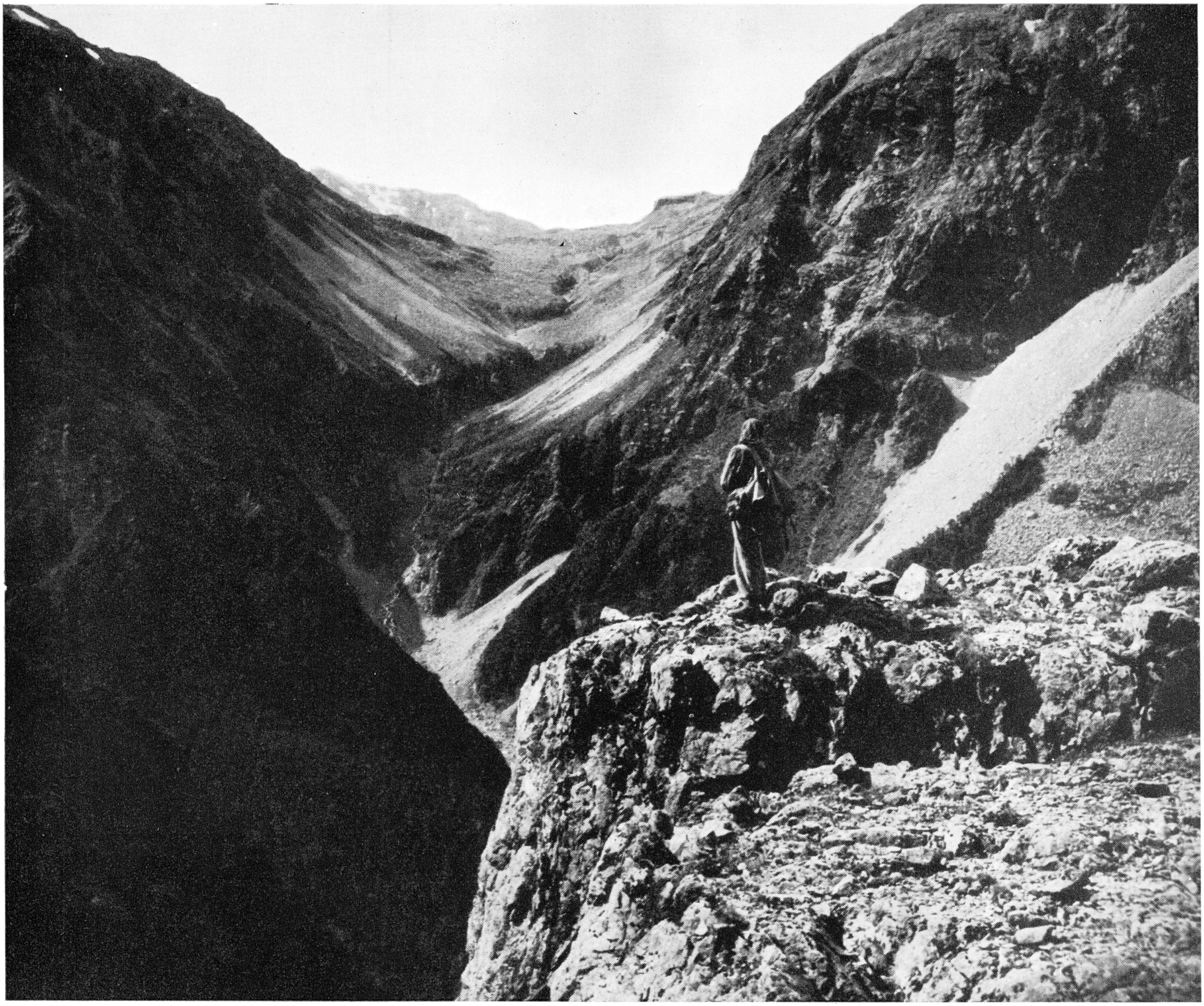




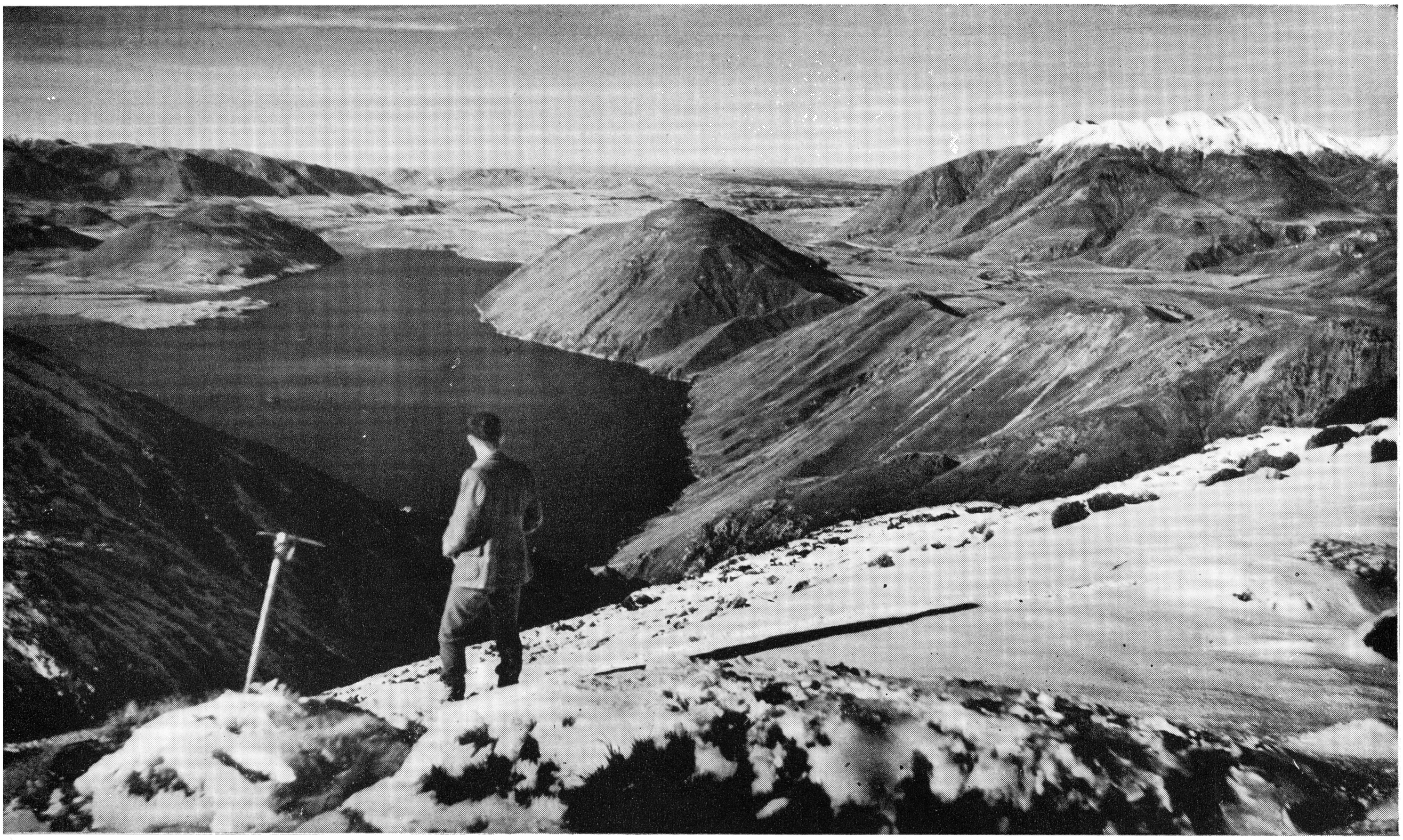
GAINED *Mount Murchison Summit*



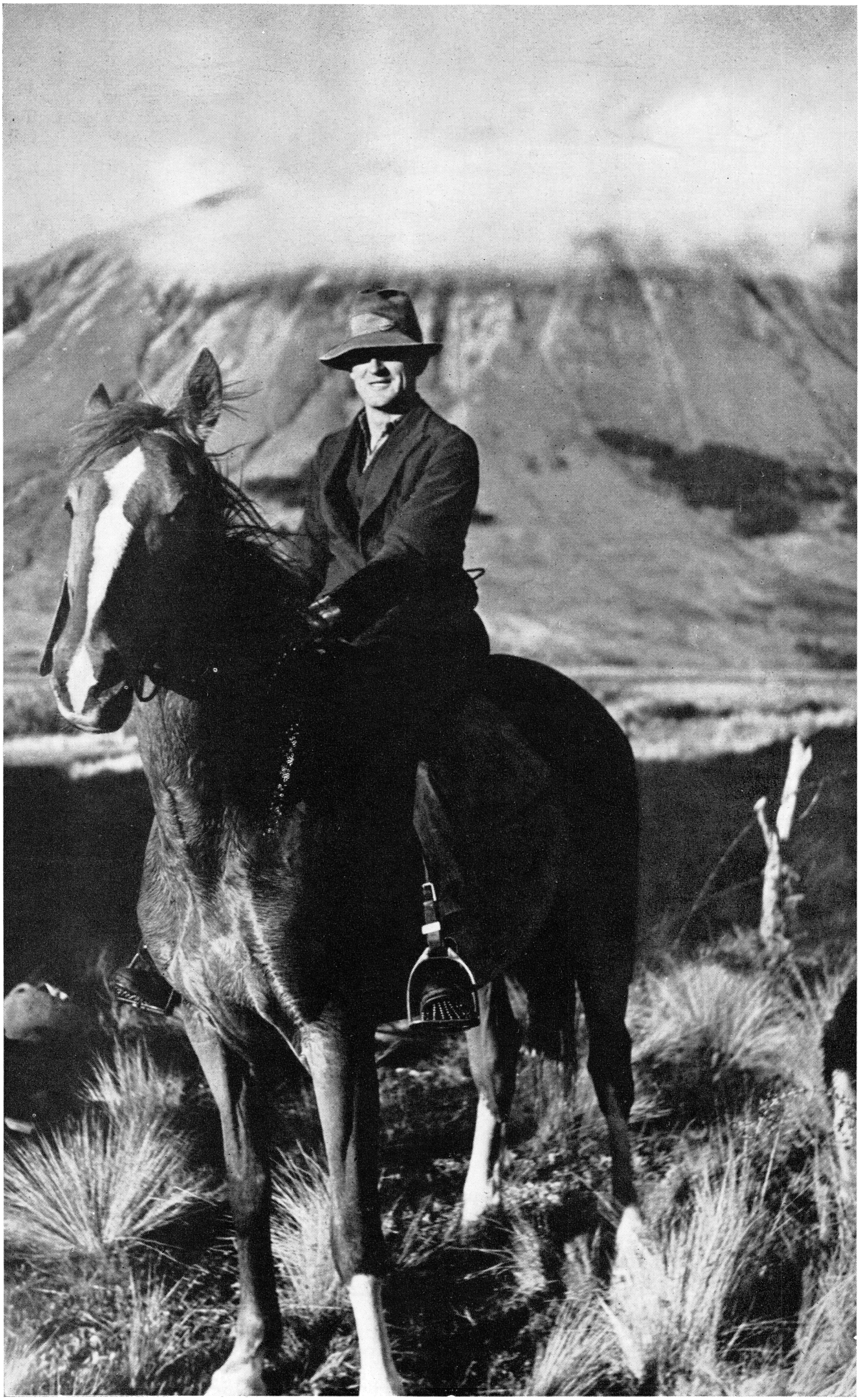
EXERCISE *A Harman Pass Crossing, Waimakariri*



RETROSPECT *Harman Pass from Camp Spur*

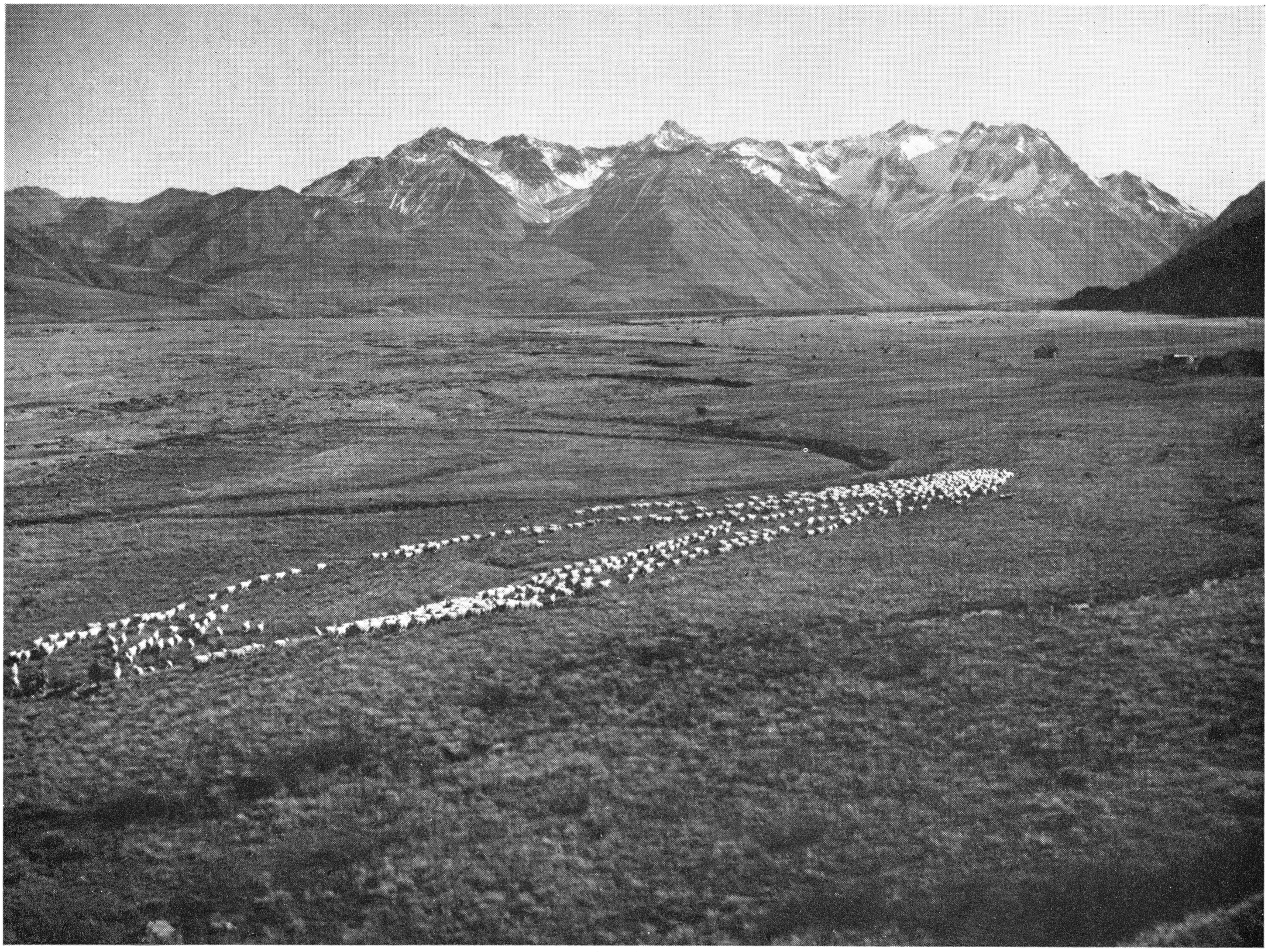


THE VIEW *Lake Coleridge from Mount Oakden*

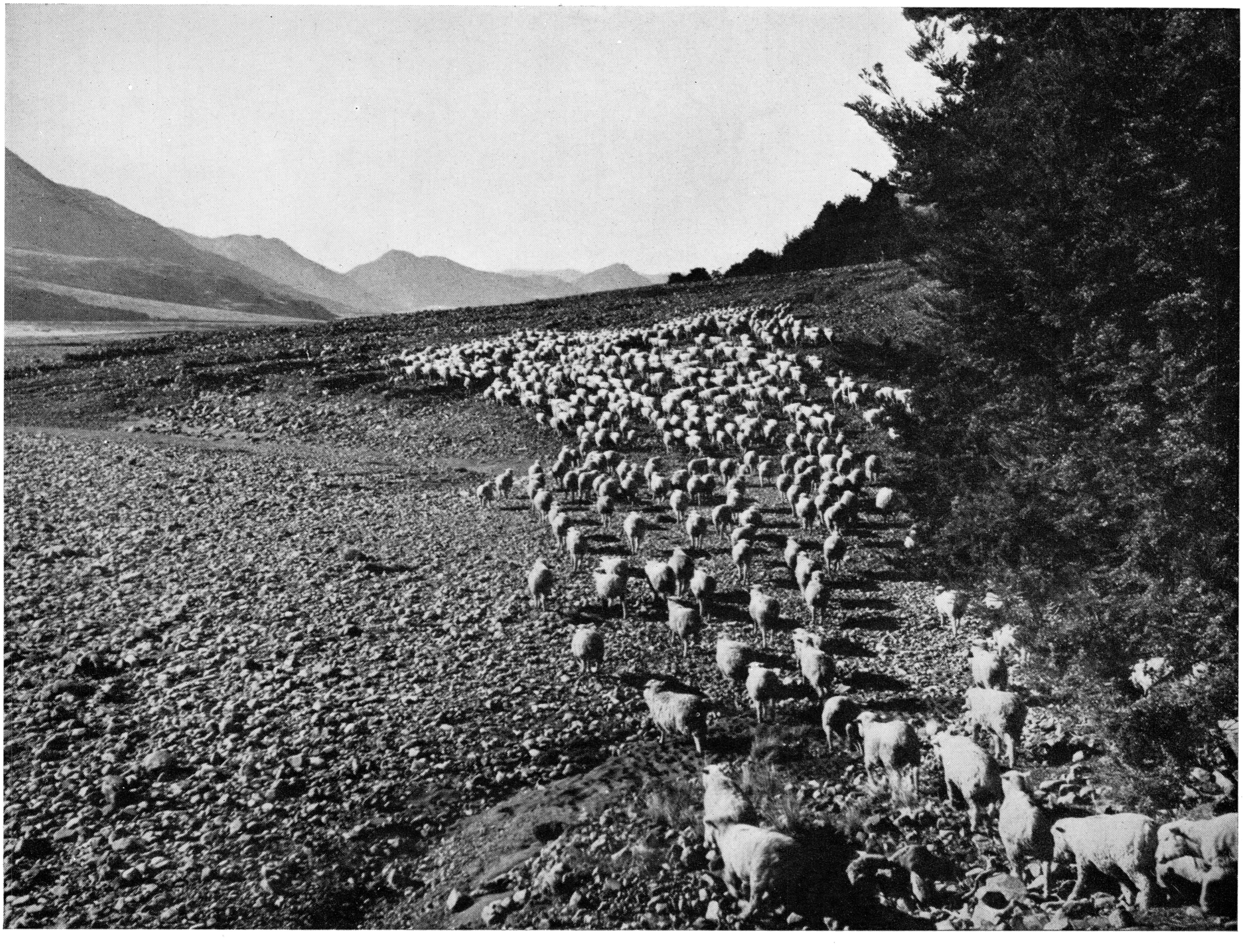


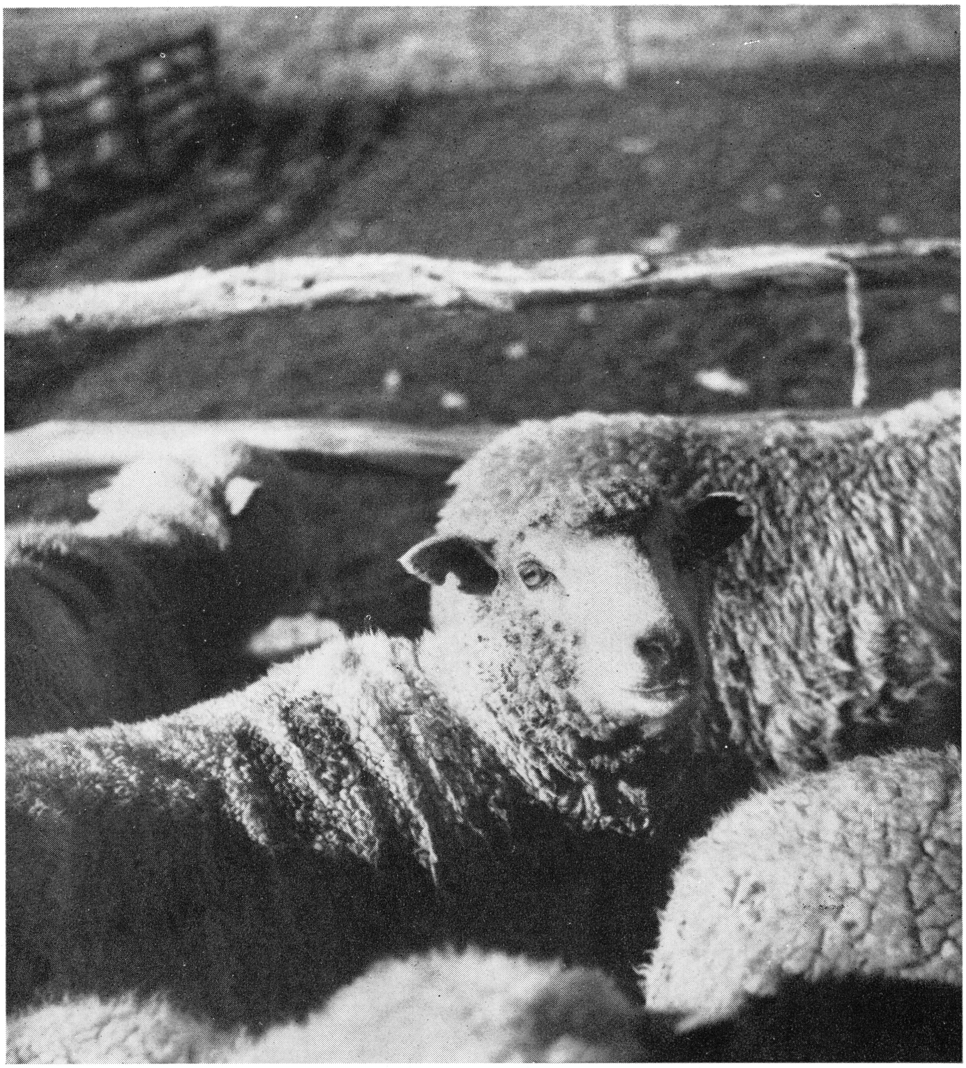
THE MUSTERER *Glenthorne, Wilberforce Valley*

RIVER OF SHEEP *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*

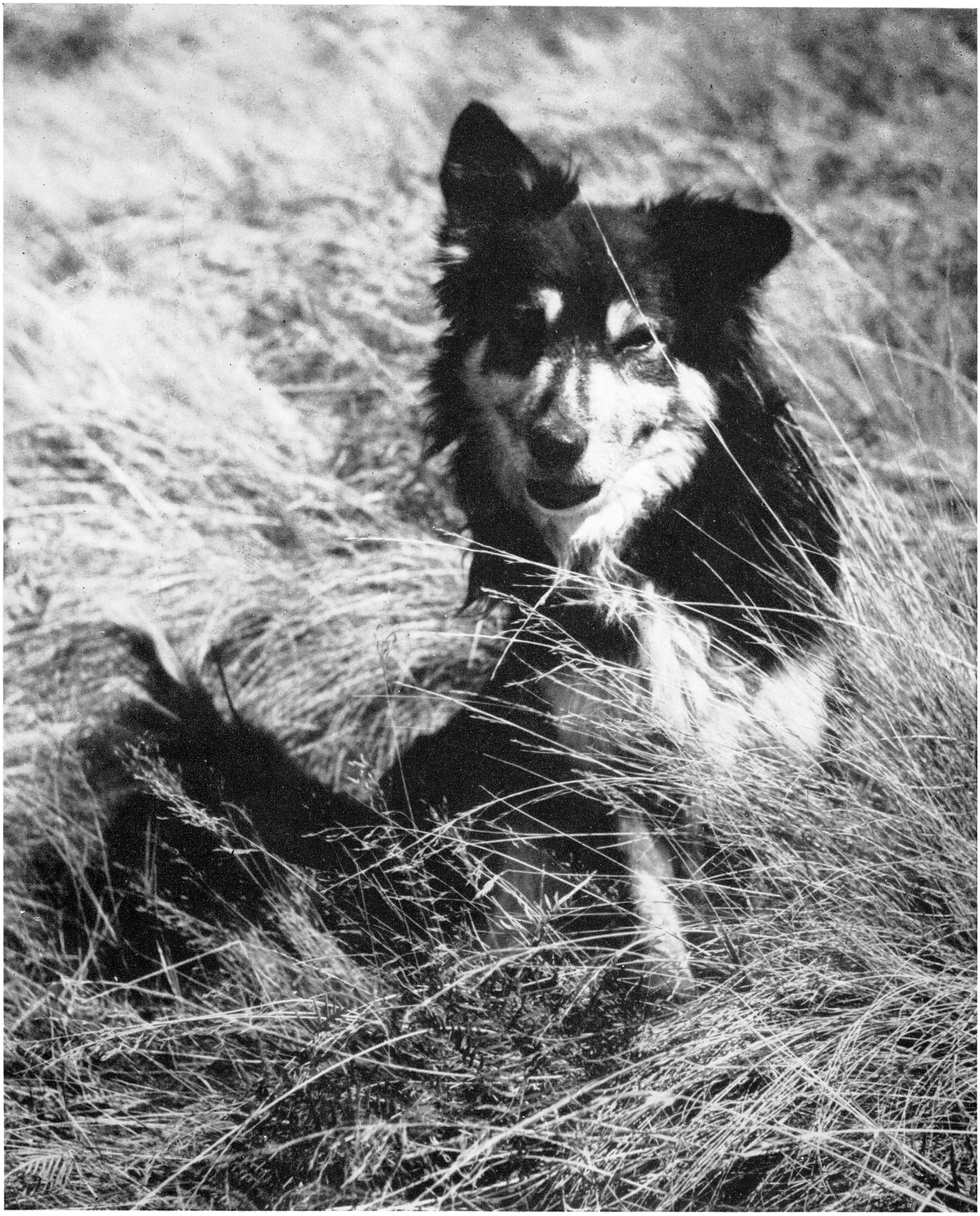


SHEEP AND SHINGLE *Mathias Valley*

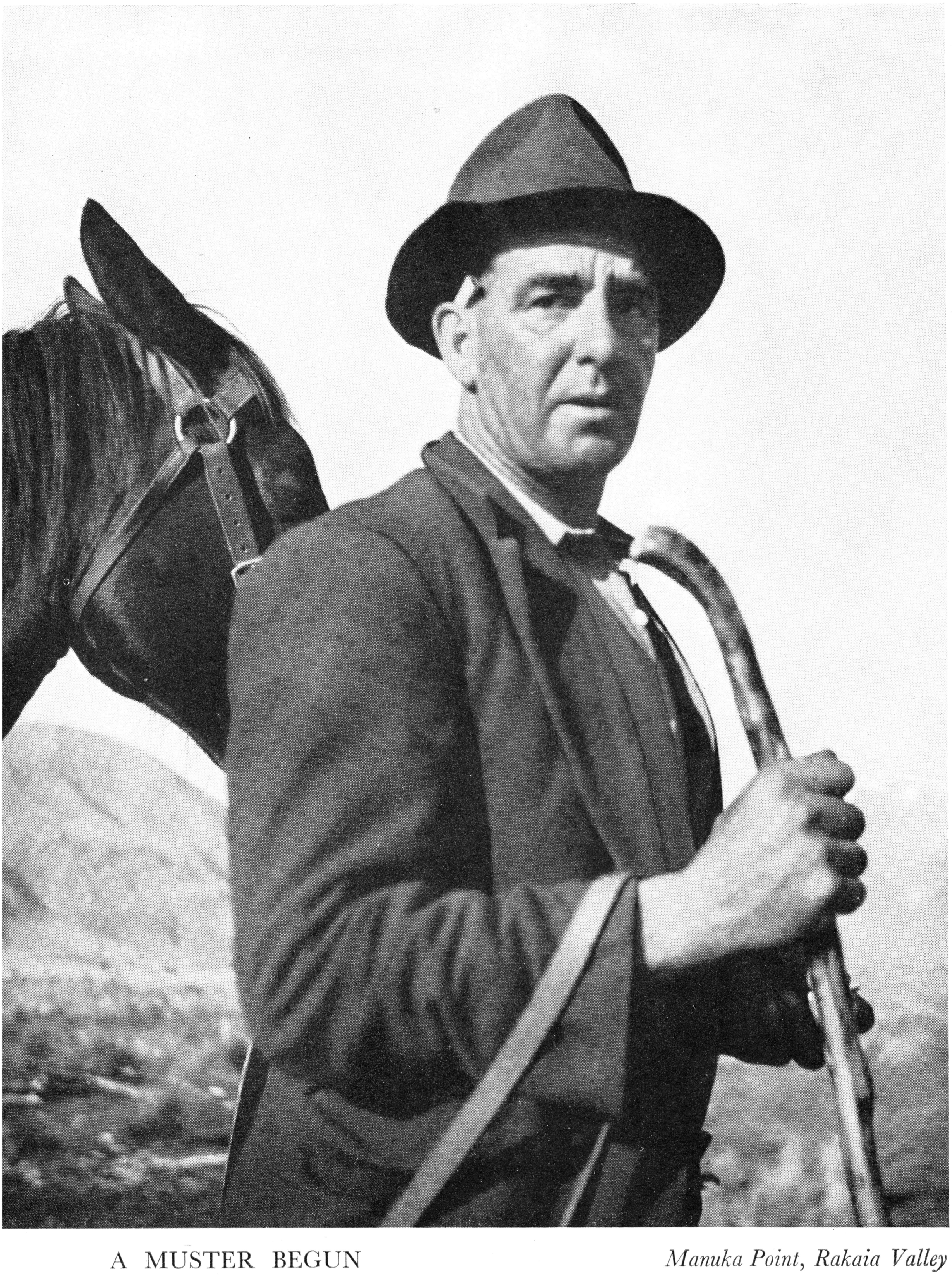




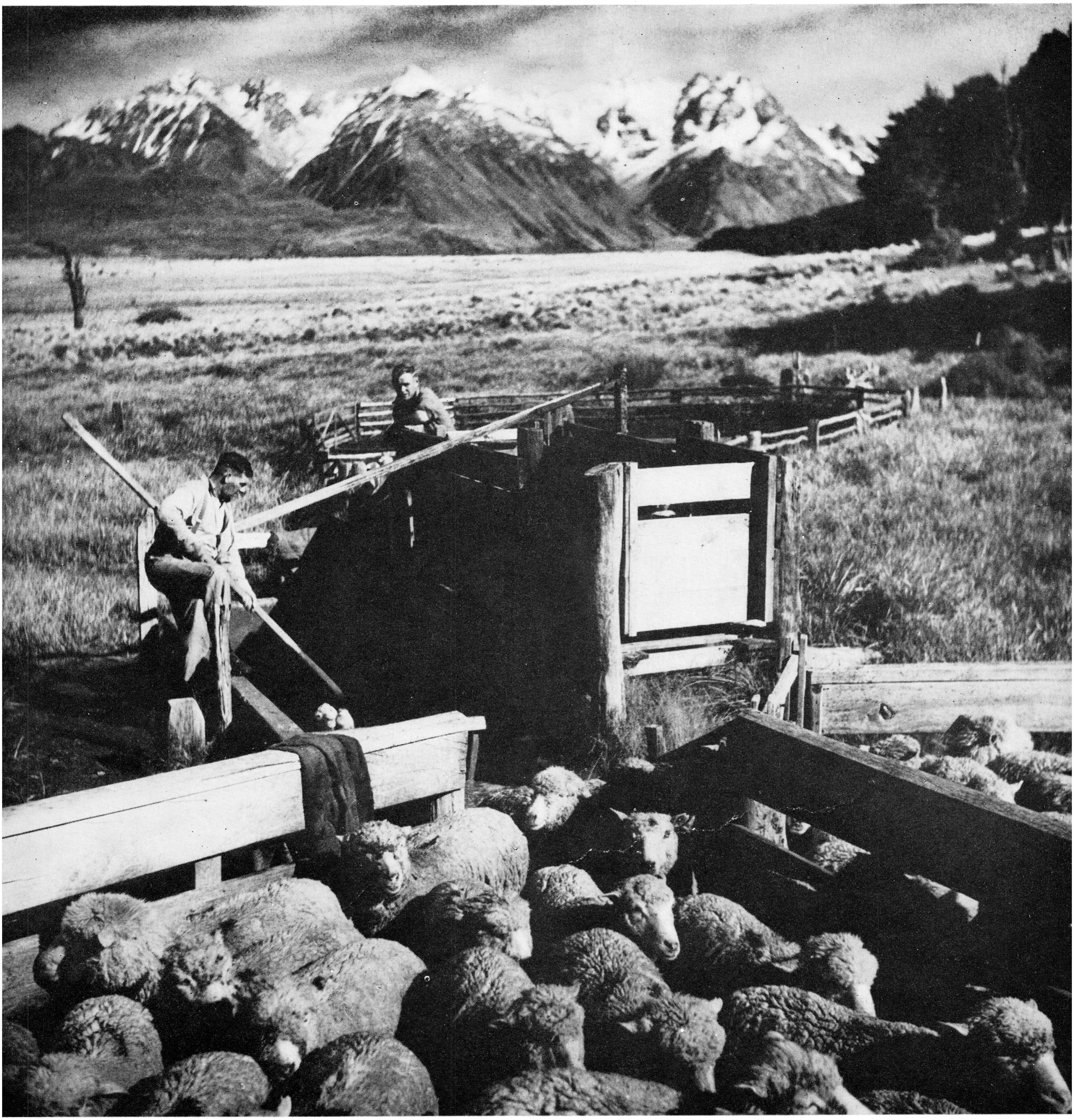
SHE OBEYS *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*



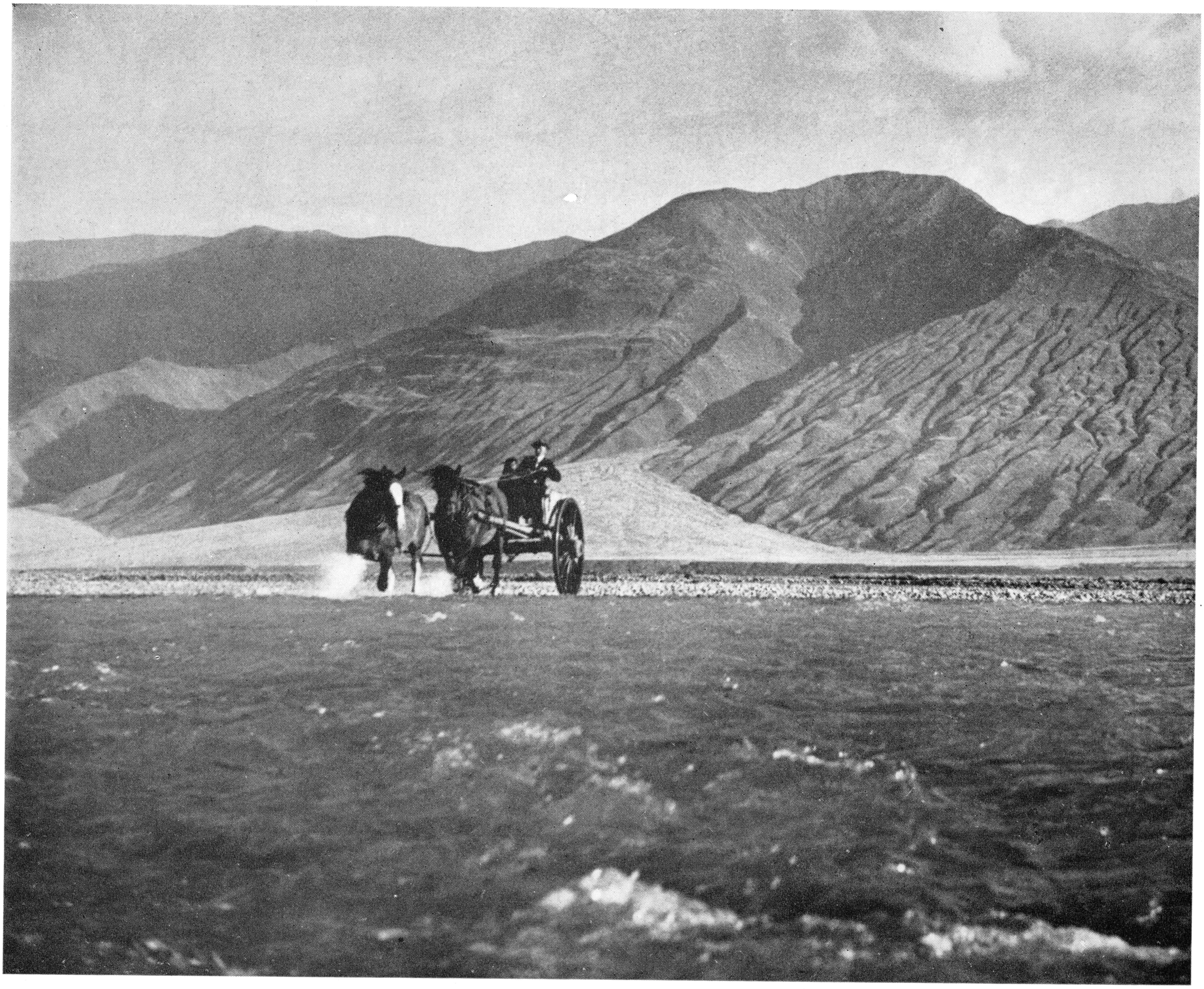
HIS BARK *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*



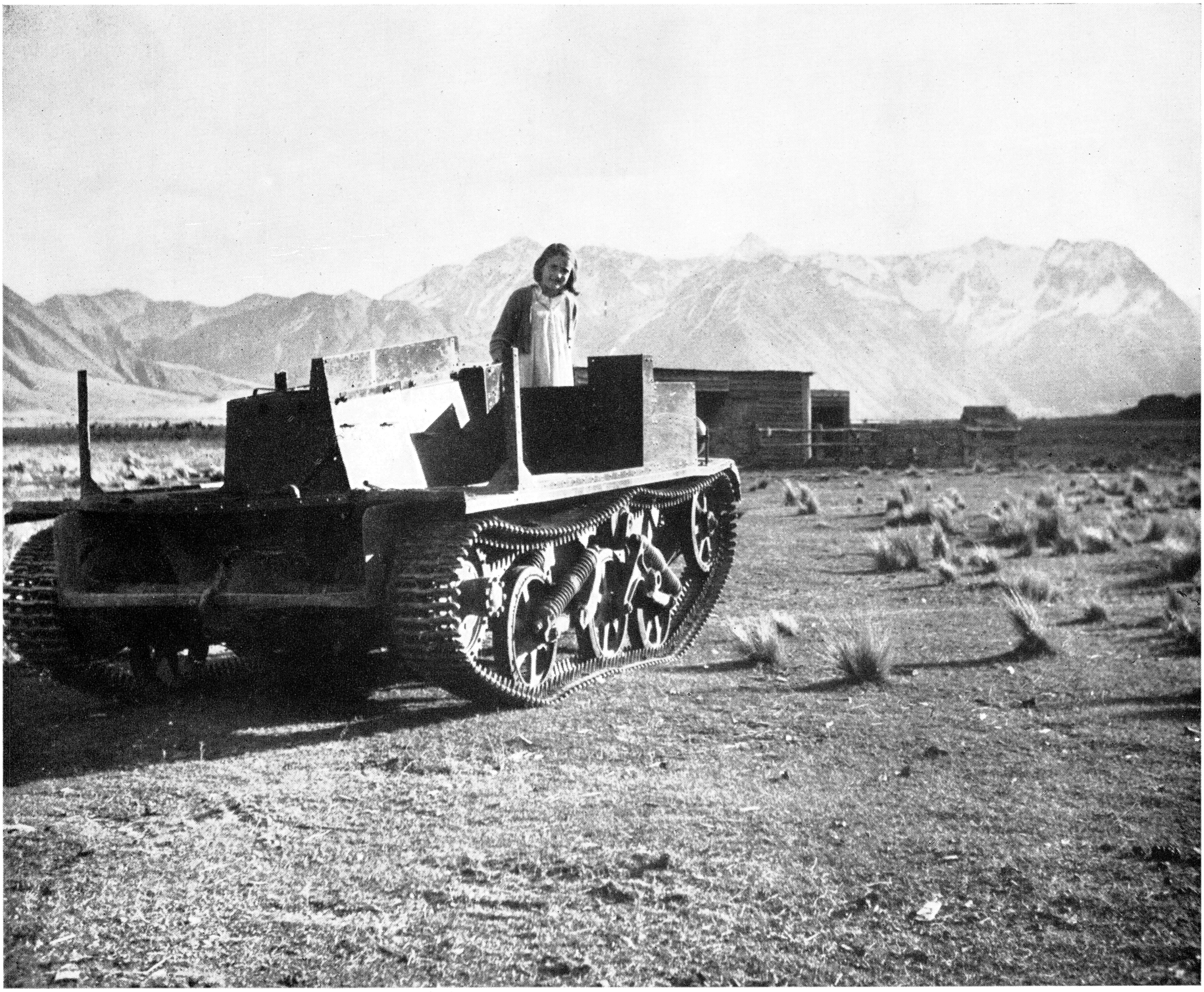
A MUSTER BEGUN *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*



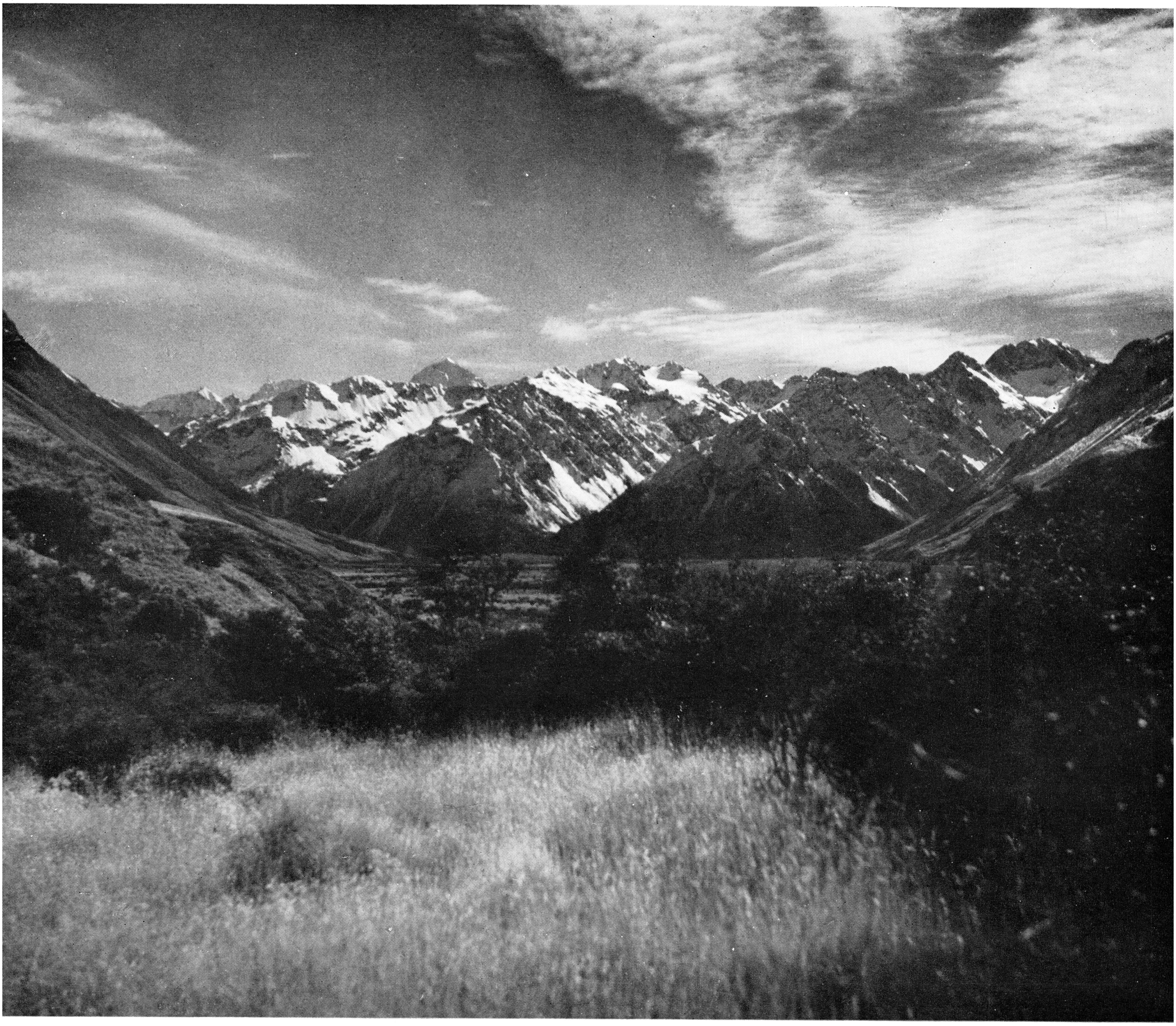
A DIP BEGUN *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*



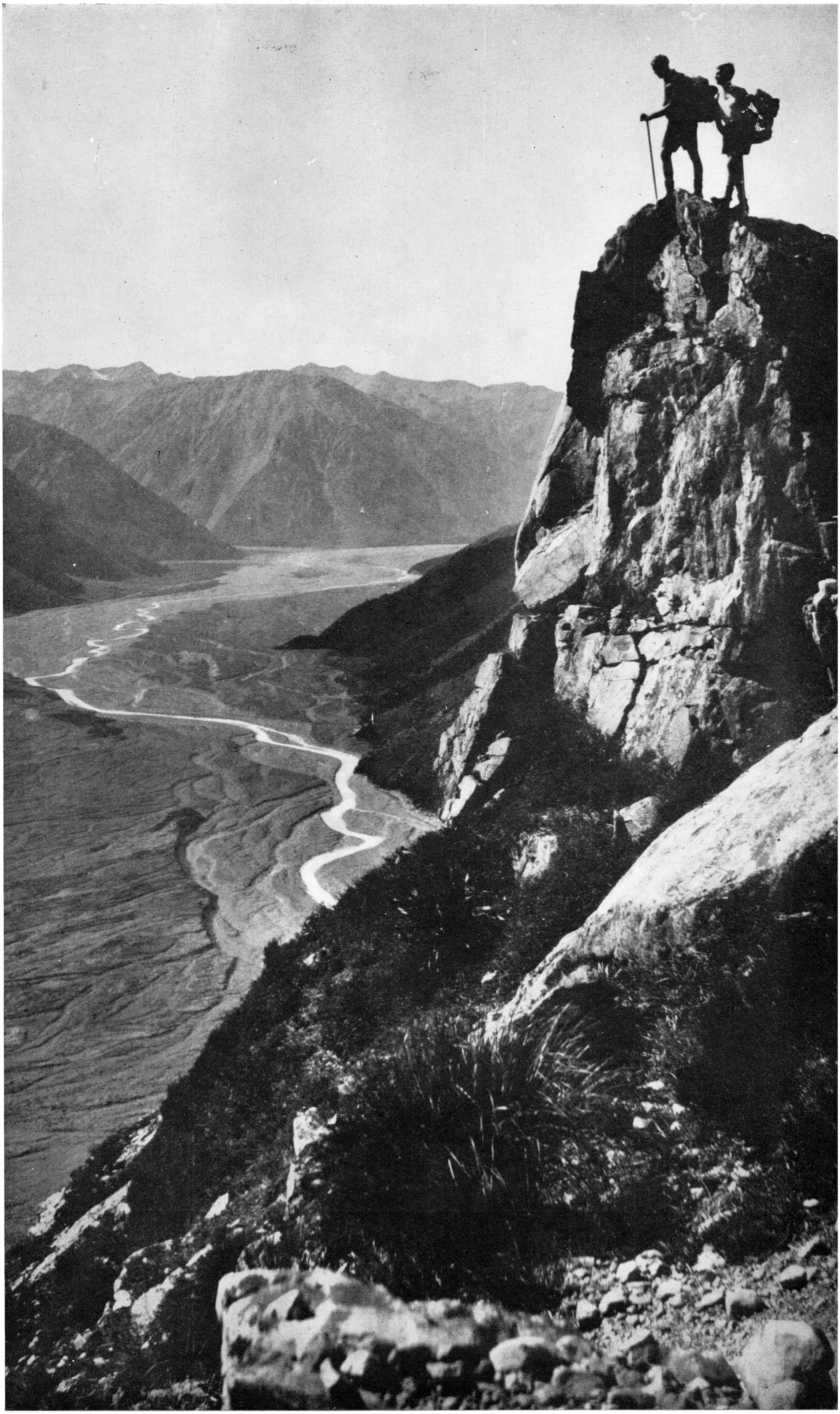
DRAY DRIVE *Across the Rakaia Valley*



MACHINE AGE *Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*

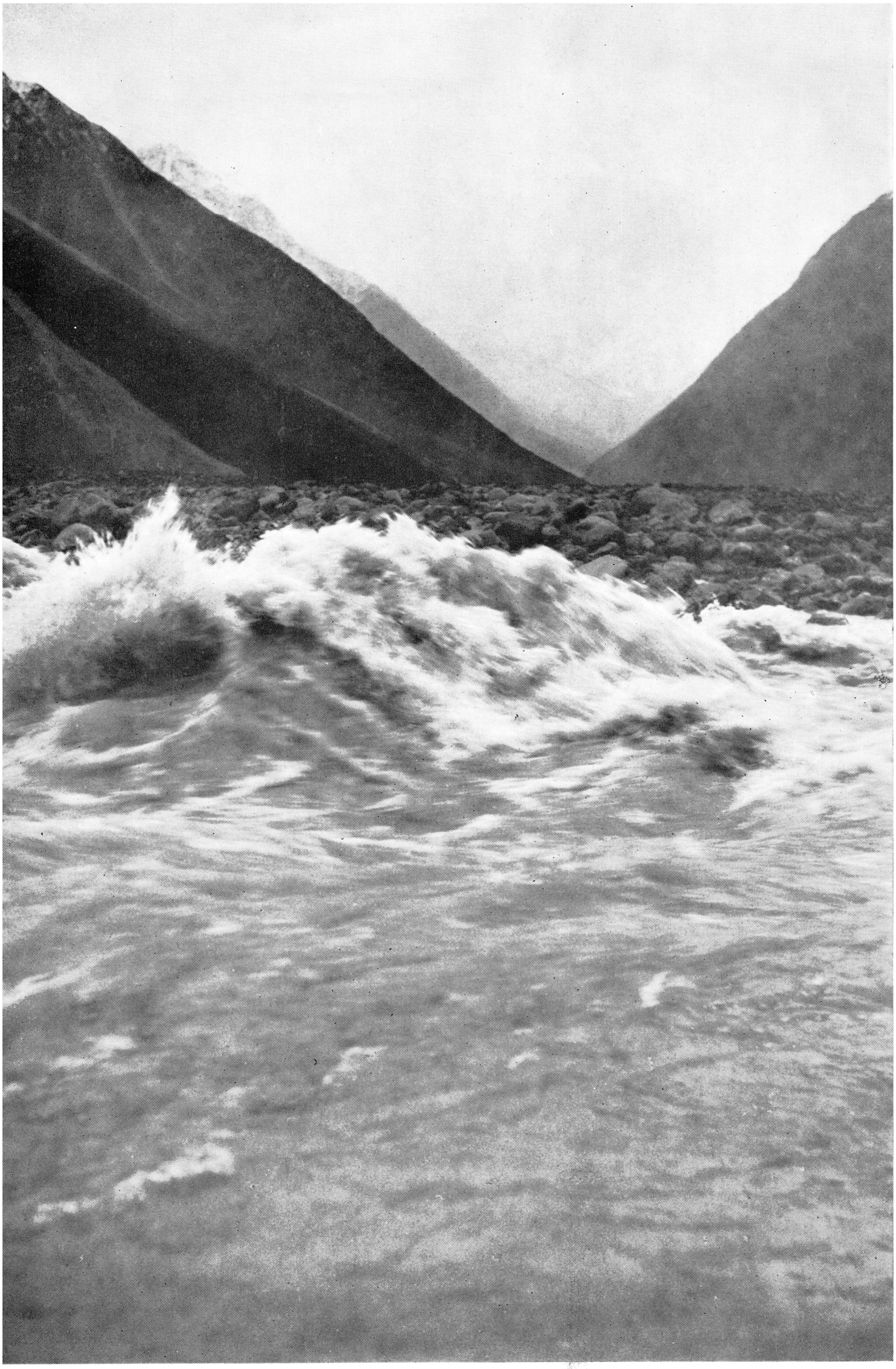


EVENING SKY *Rakaia Valley*

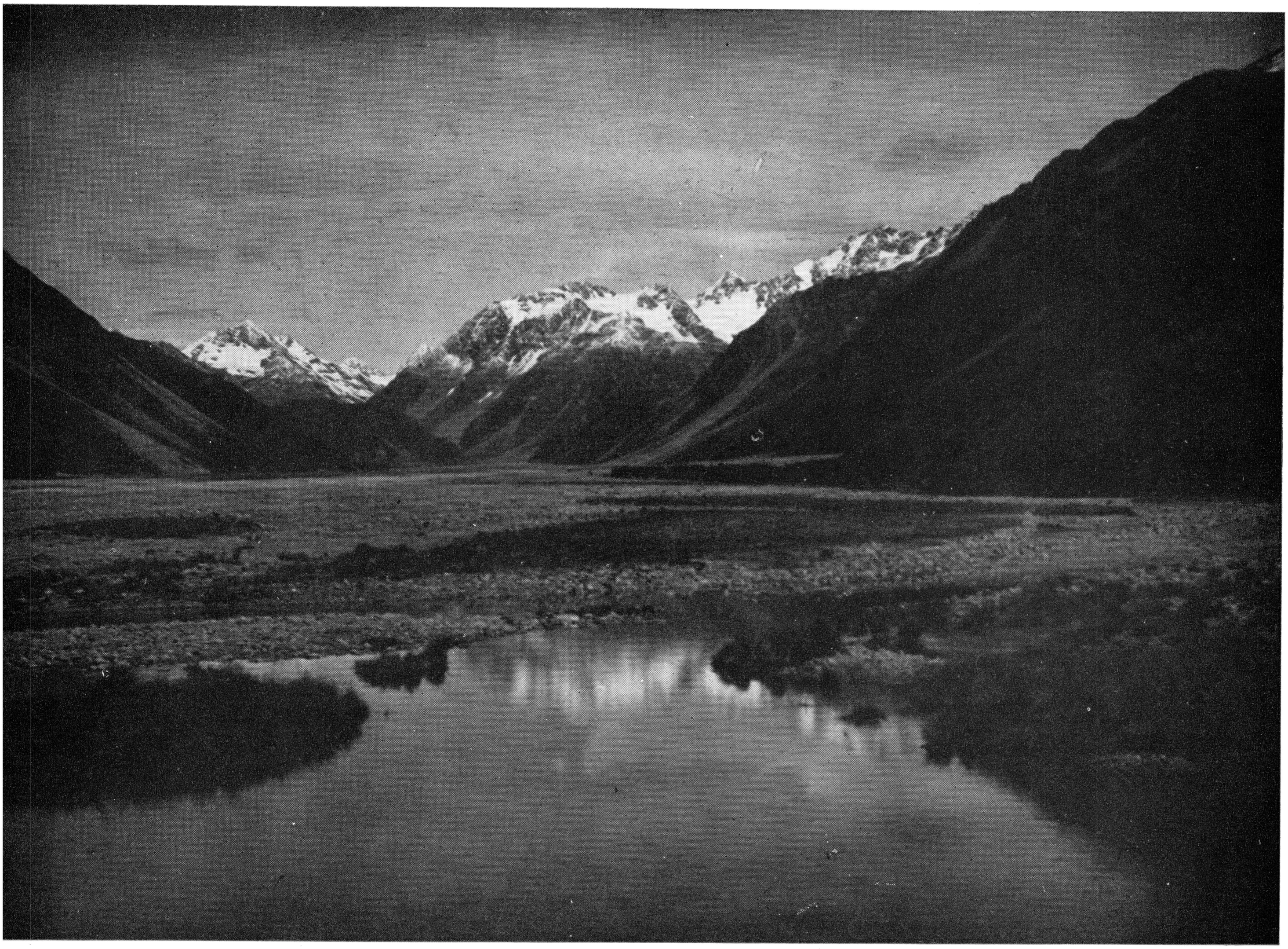


MEINS KNOB
OUTLINE

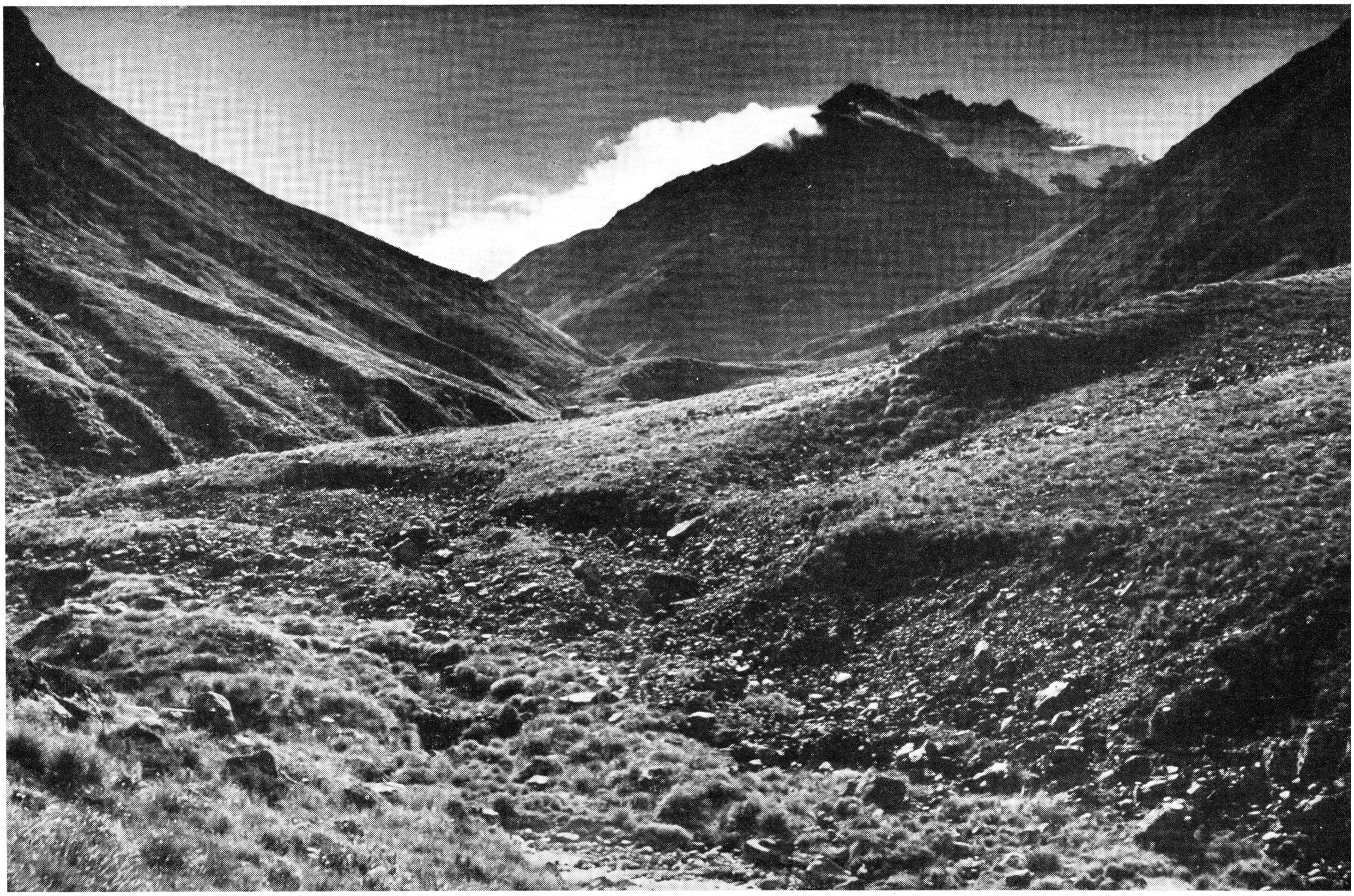
Rakaia Valley



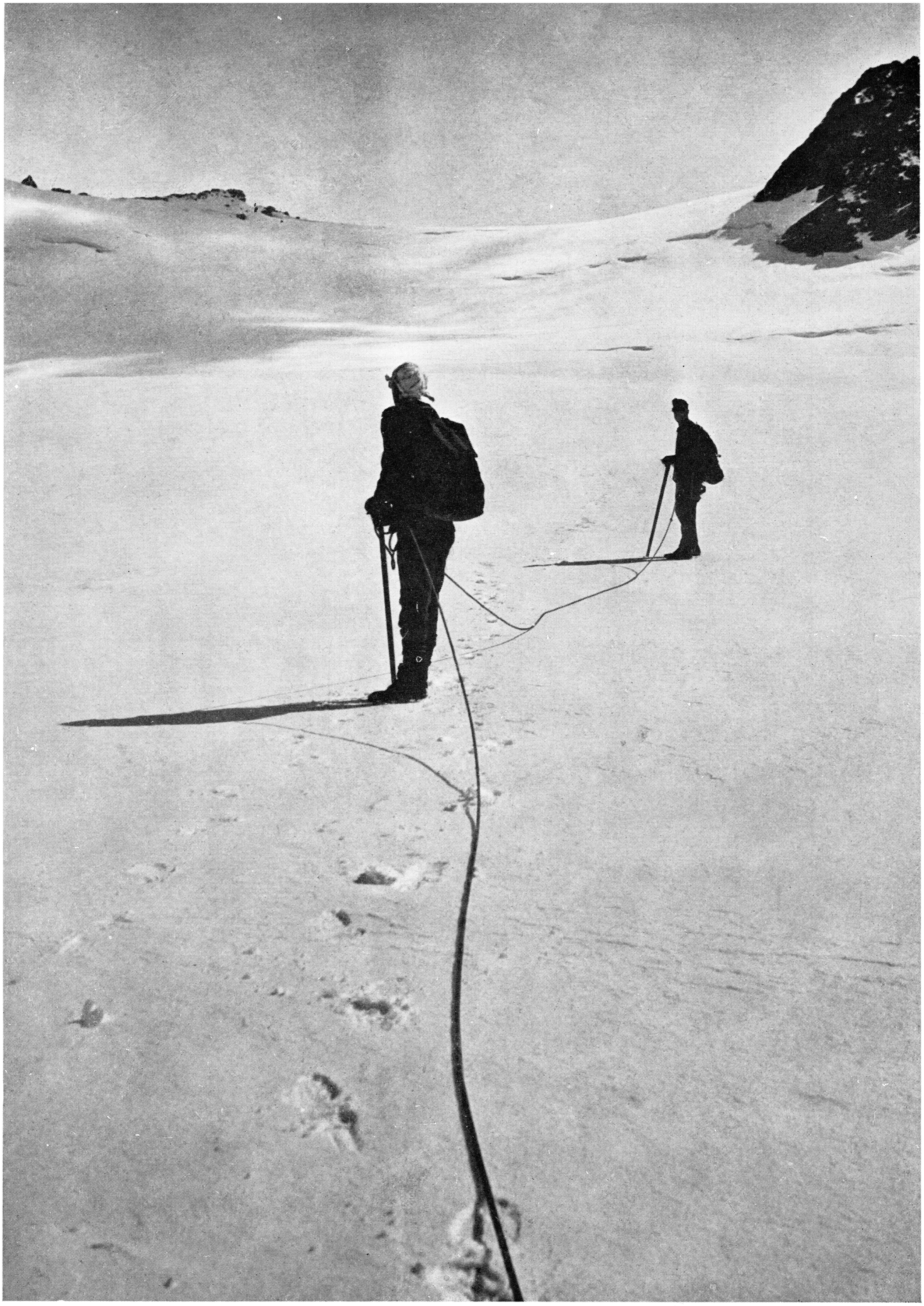
FLOOD WATERS *Rakaia Valley*



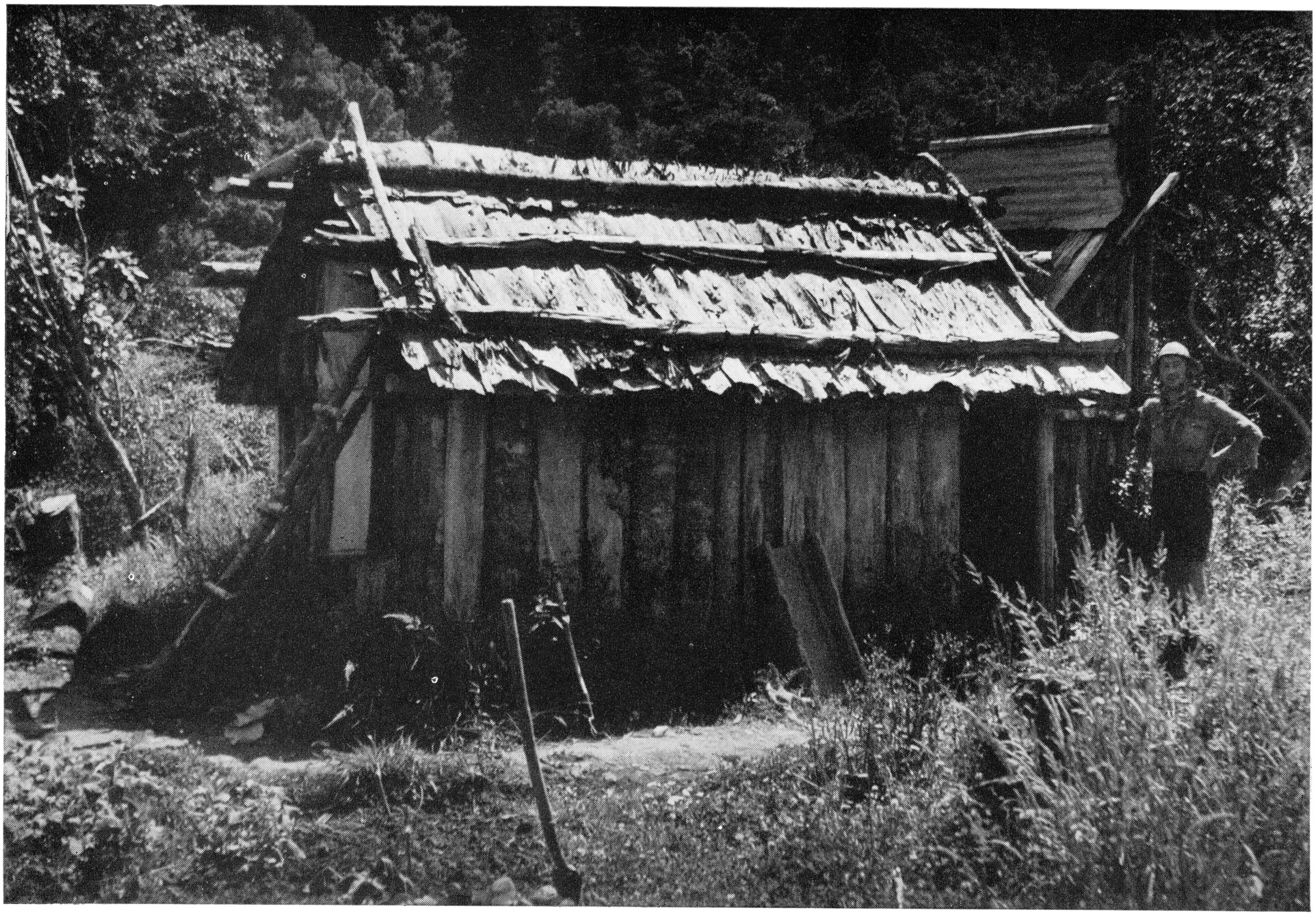
STILL WATERS *Rakaia Valley*



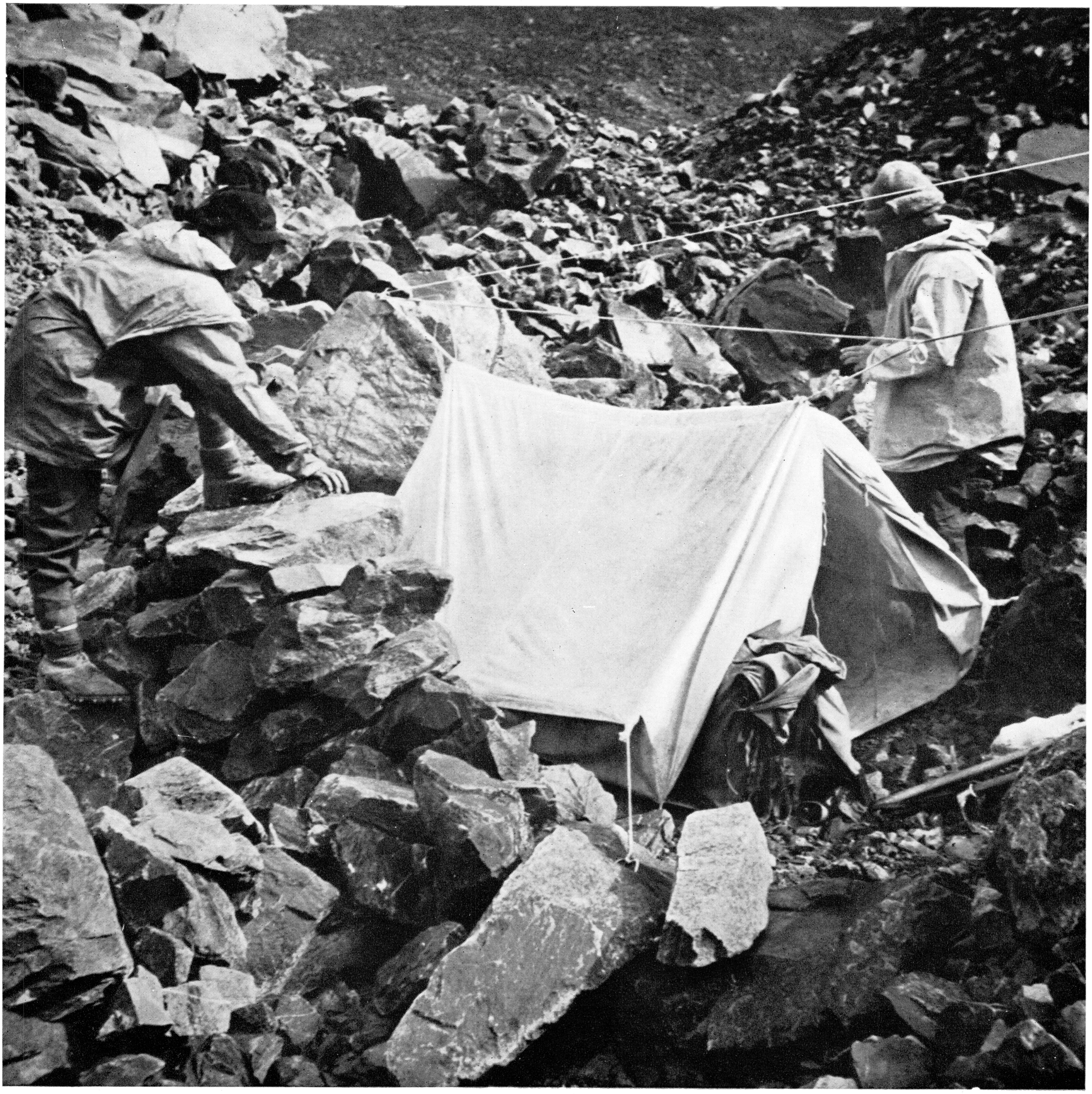
PASS TO WESTLAND *Whitcombe Pass from Louper Valley*



COL TO WESTLAND *Erewhon Col from Ramsay Glacier*

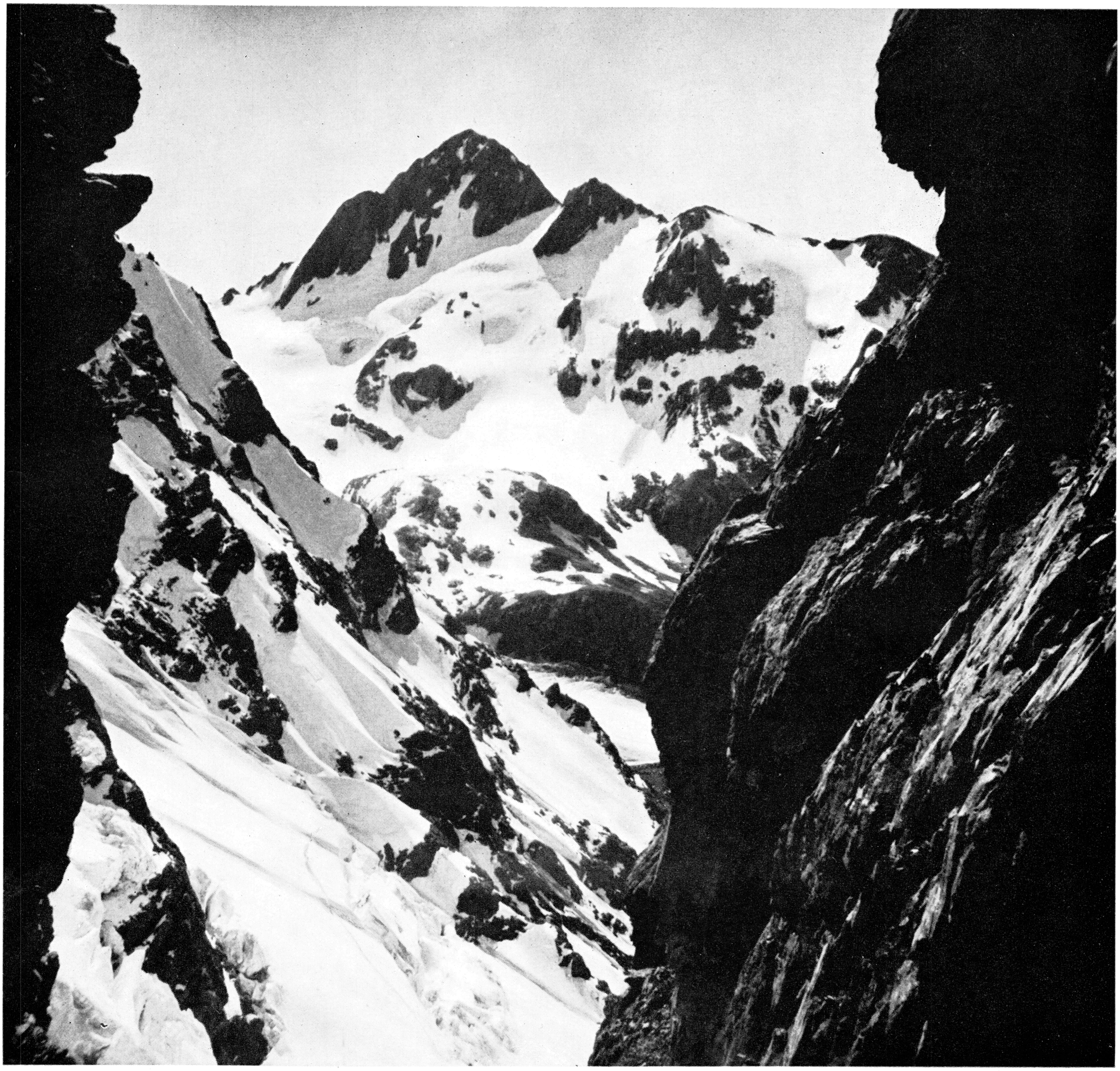


GOLD PROSPECTOR'S HUT *Perth Valley*



MORAINE CAMP *Ramsay Glacier, Rakaia*

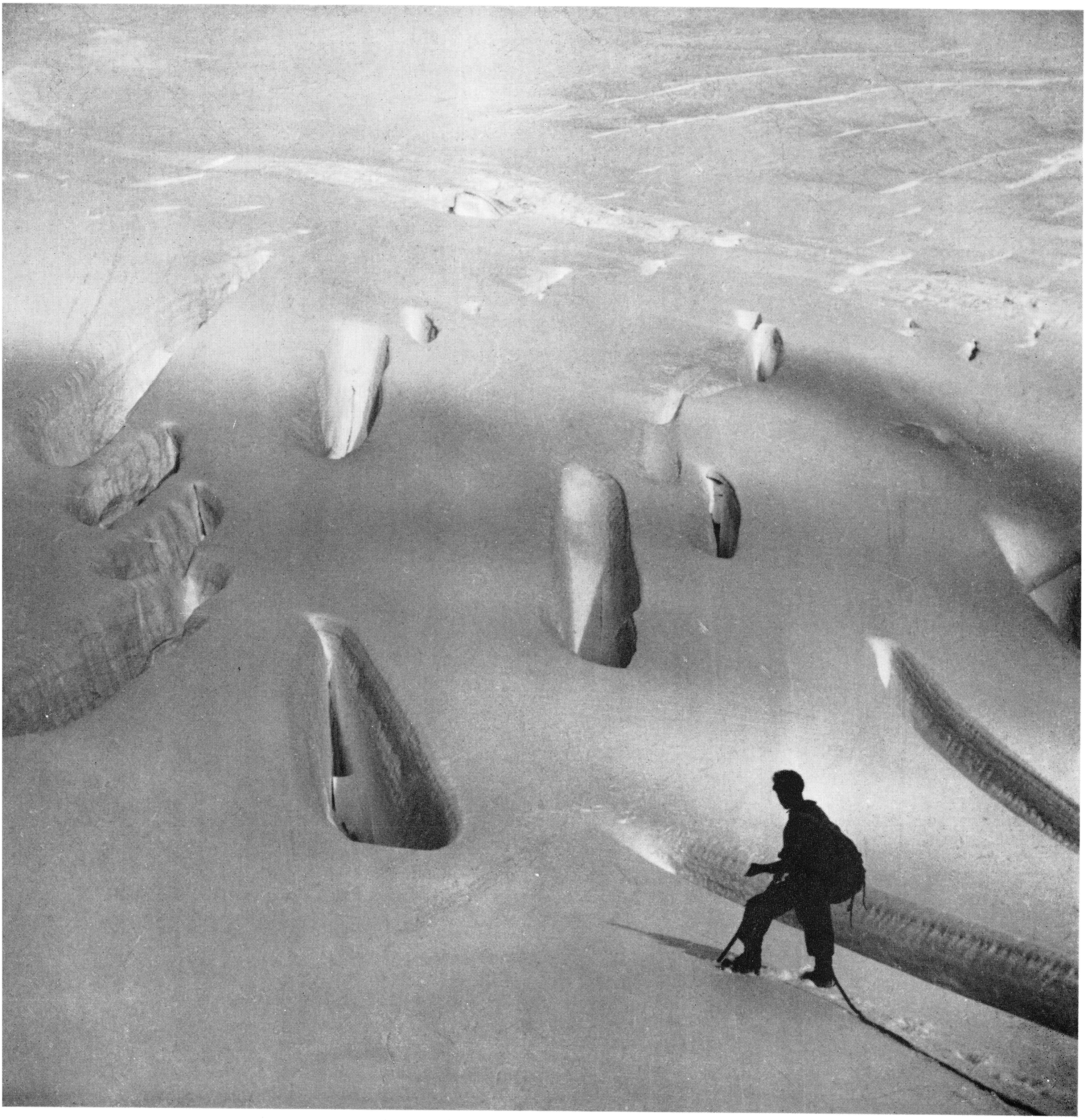
ADVANCE *Menace Icefall, Ramsay Glacier*

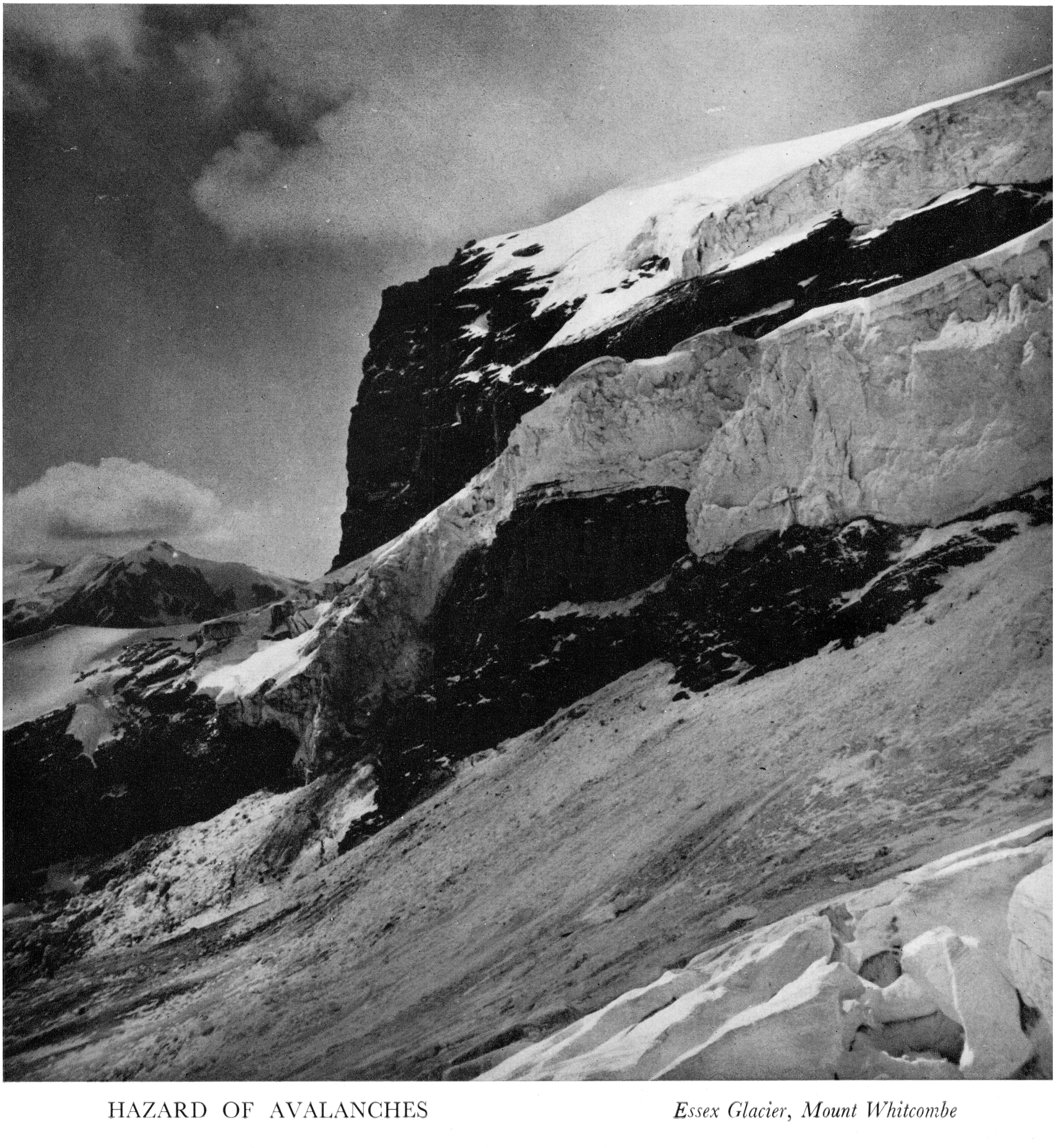


TO A GAP

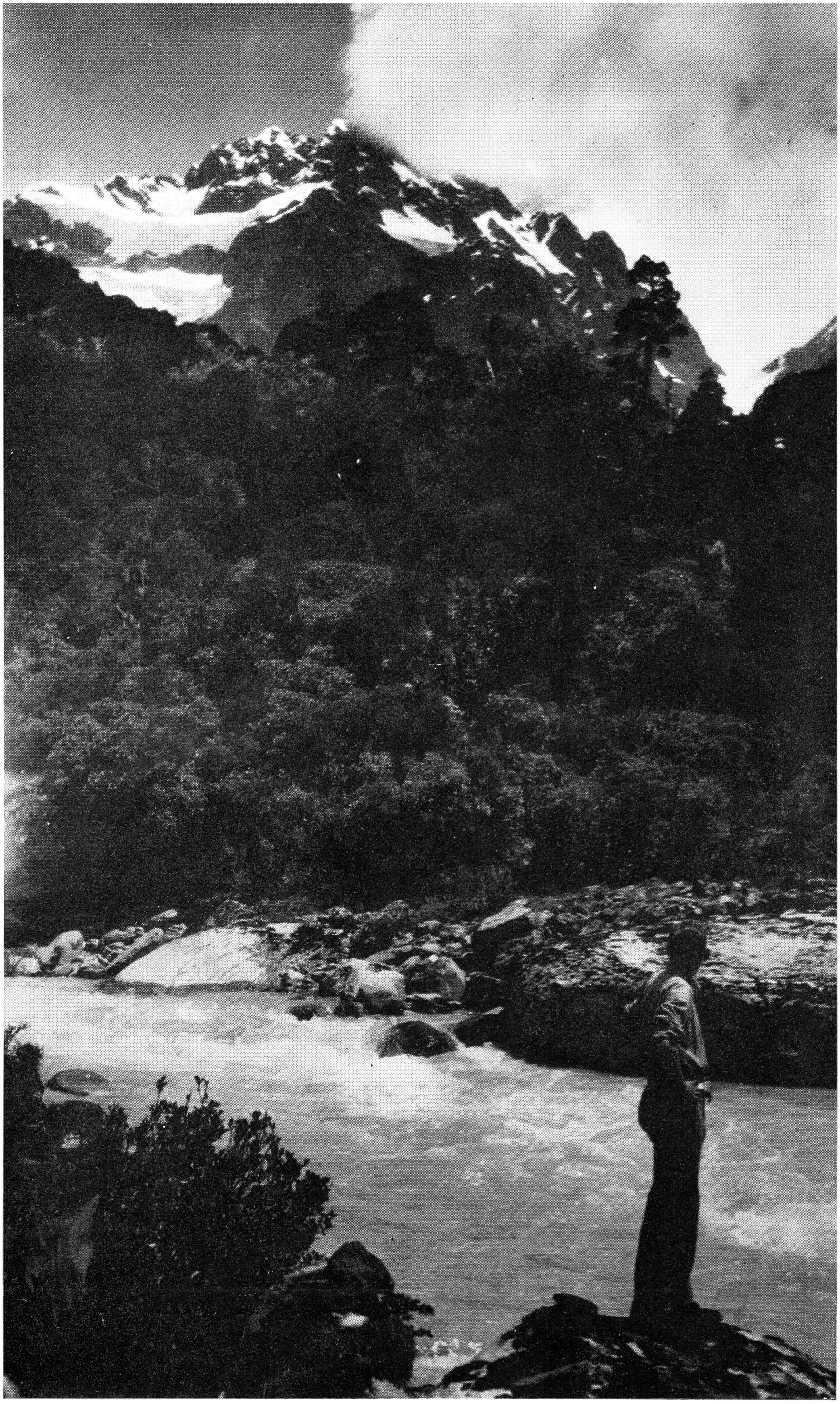
Louper Peak on Skyline

HAZARD OF CREVASSES *Essex Glacier, Mount Whitcombe*



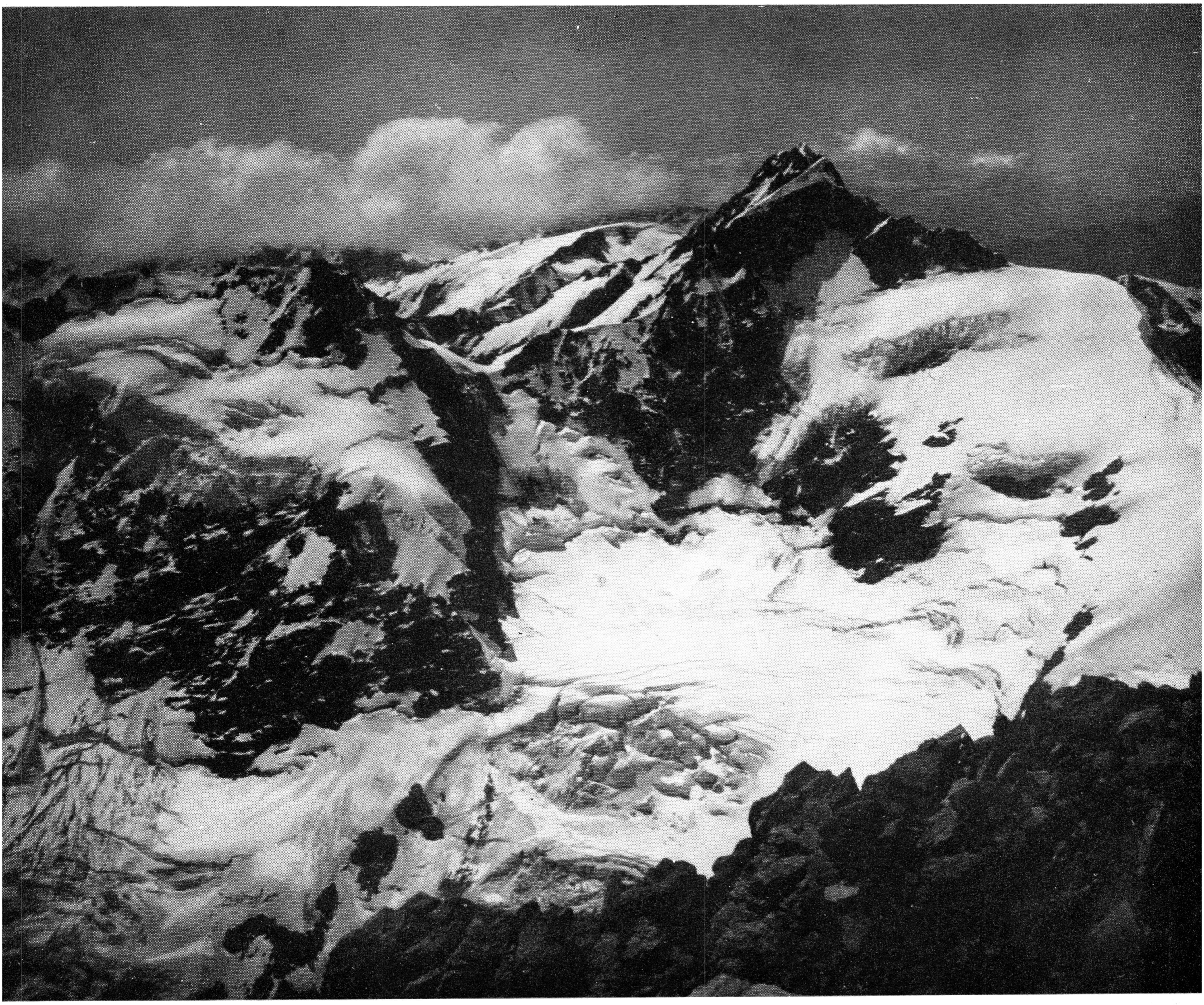


HAZARD OF AVALANCHES *Essex Glacier, Mount Whitcombe*



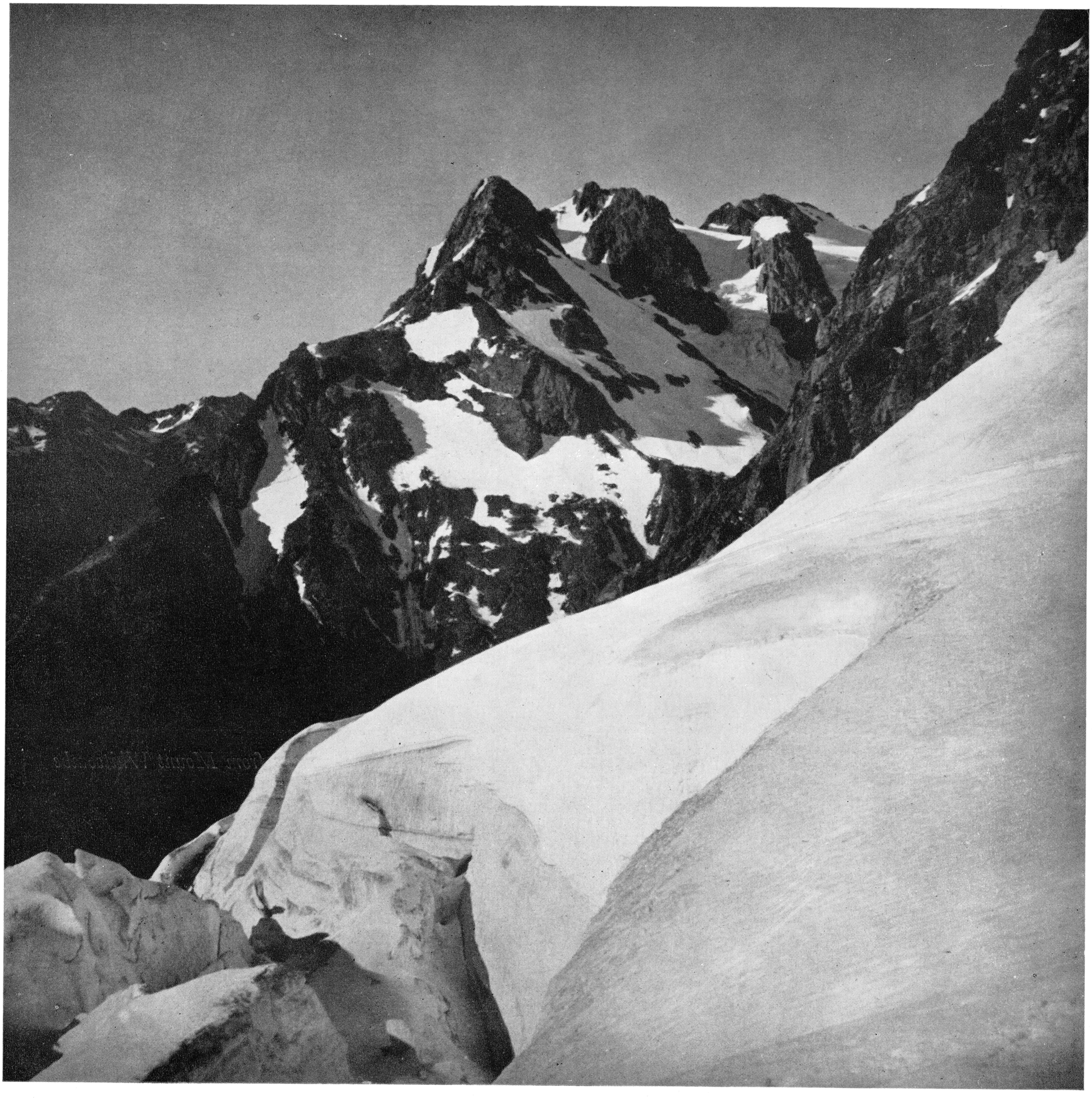
FROM WESTLAND AT 2000 FEET

Mount Evans above the Whitcombe River

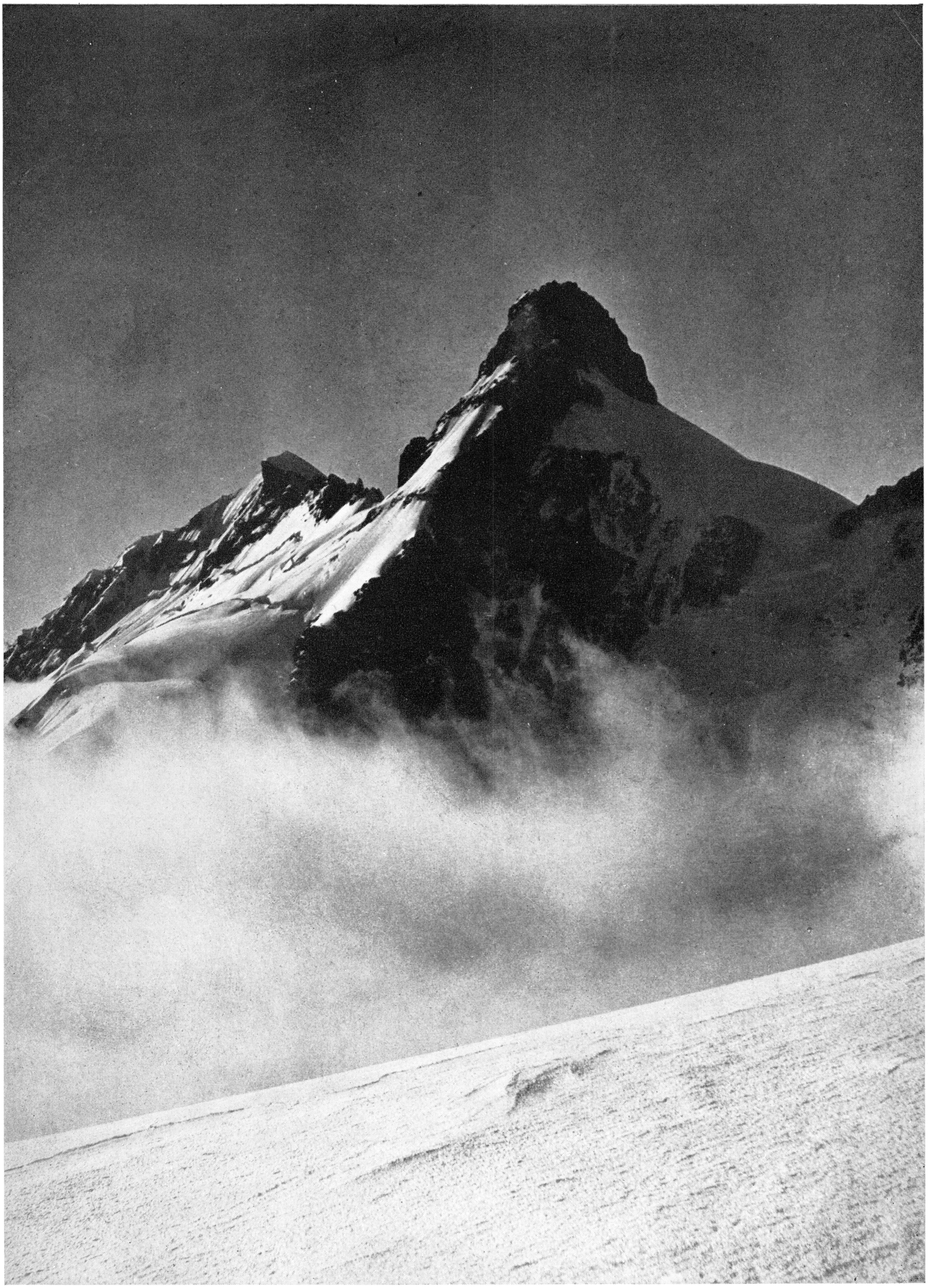


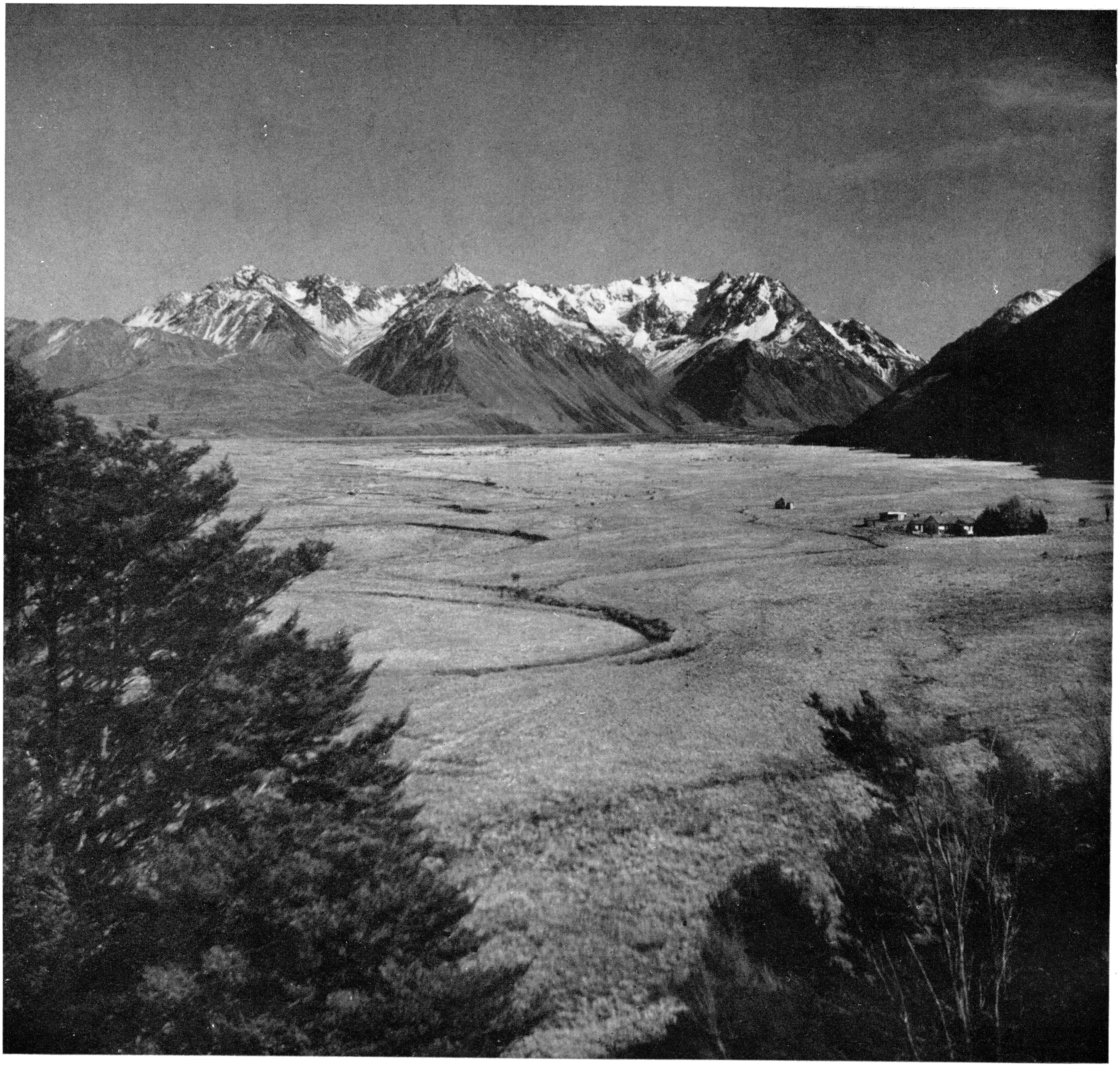
FROM THE DIVIDE AT 8658 FEET *Mount Evans from Mount Whitcombe*

Mount Ramsay from the Menace Icefall

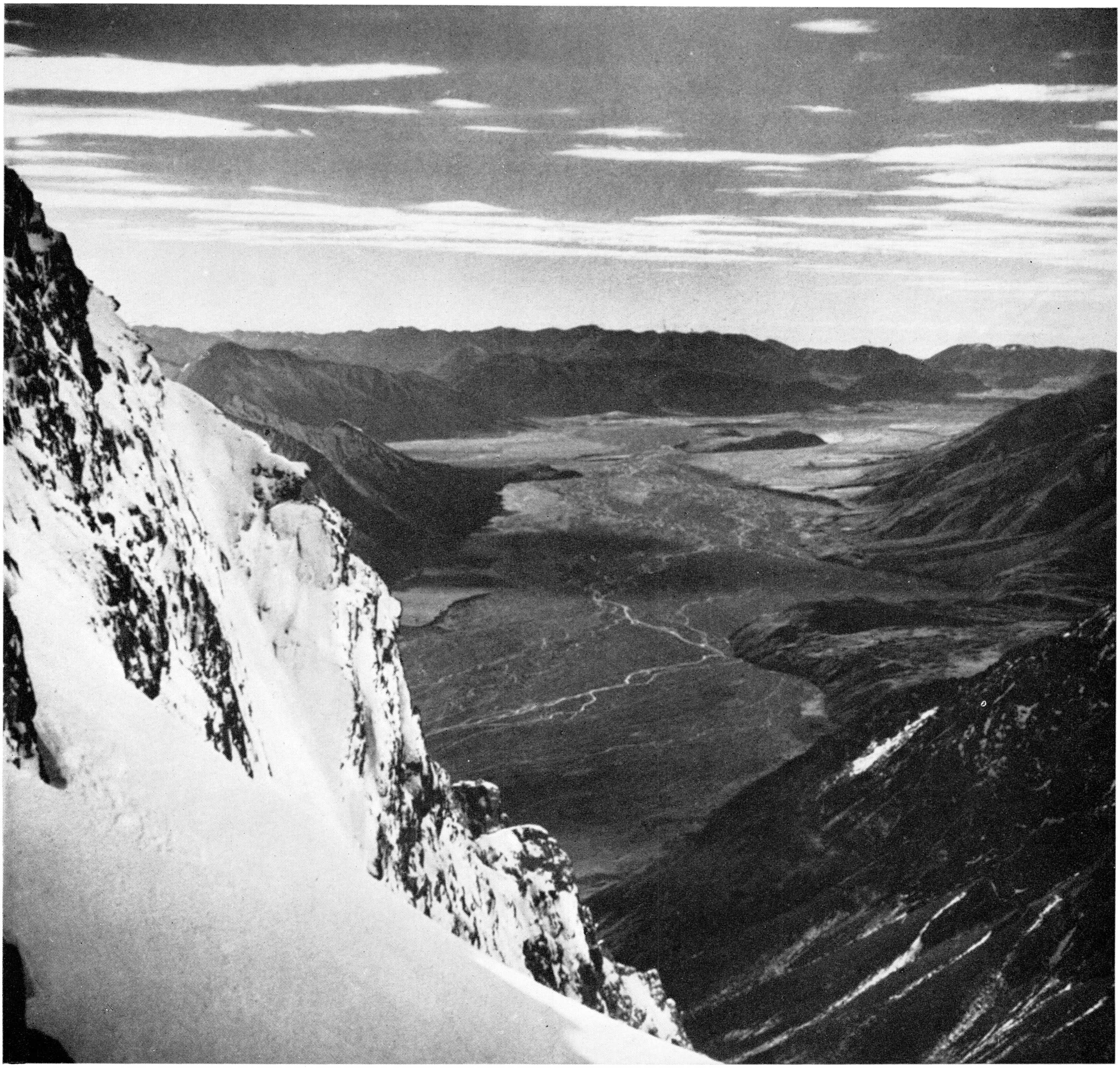


MIST RISING *Red Lion Peak from the Full Moon Saddle, Westland*





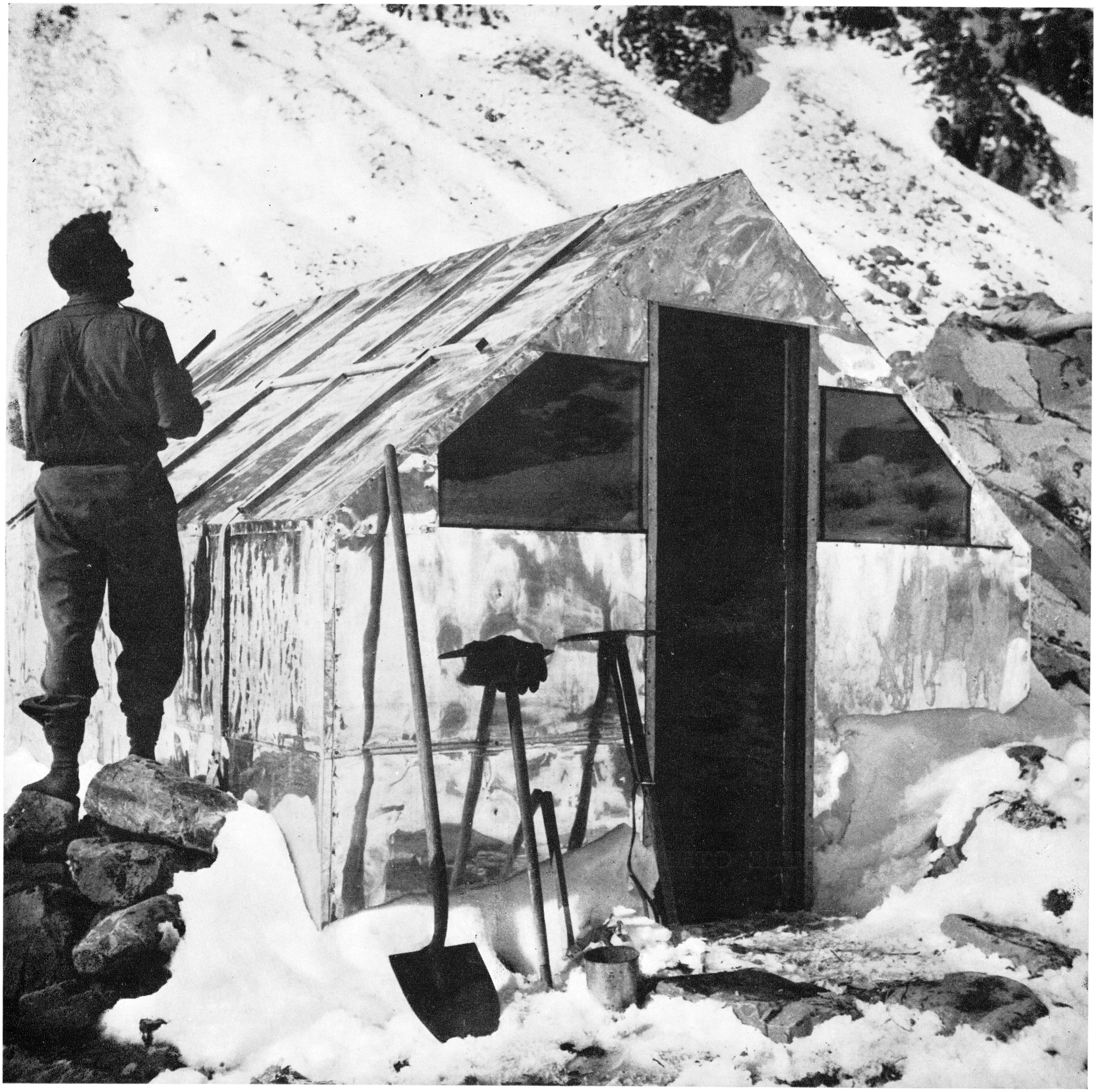
CONTRAST THE ONE WAY *Arrowsmith Range from Manuka Point, Rakaia Valley*

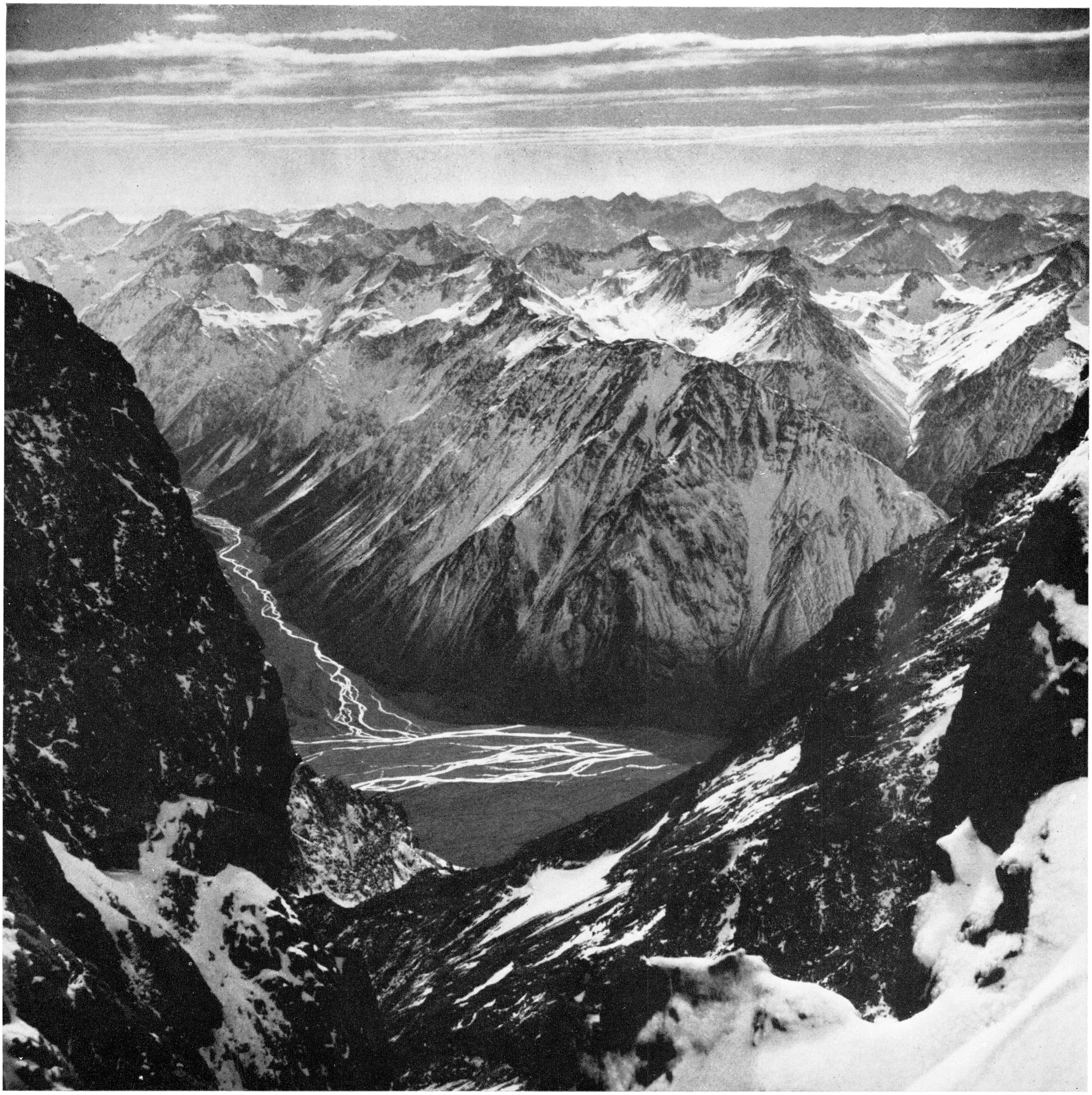


CONTRAST THE OTHER WAY *Manuka Point from Arrowsmith Range*

ALPINE REFUGE

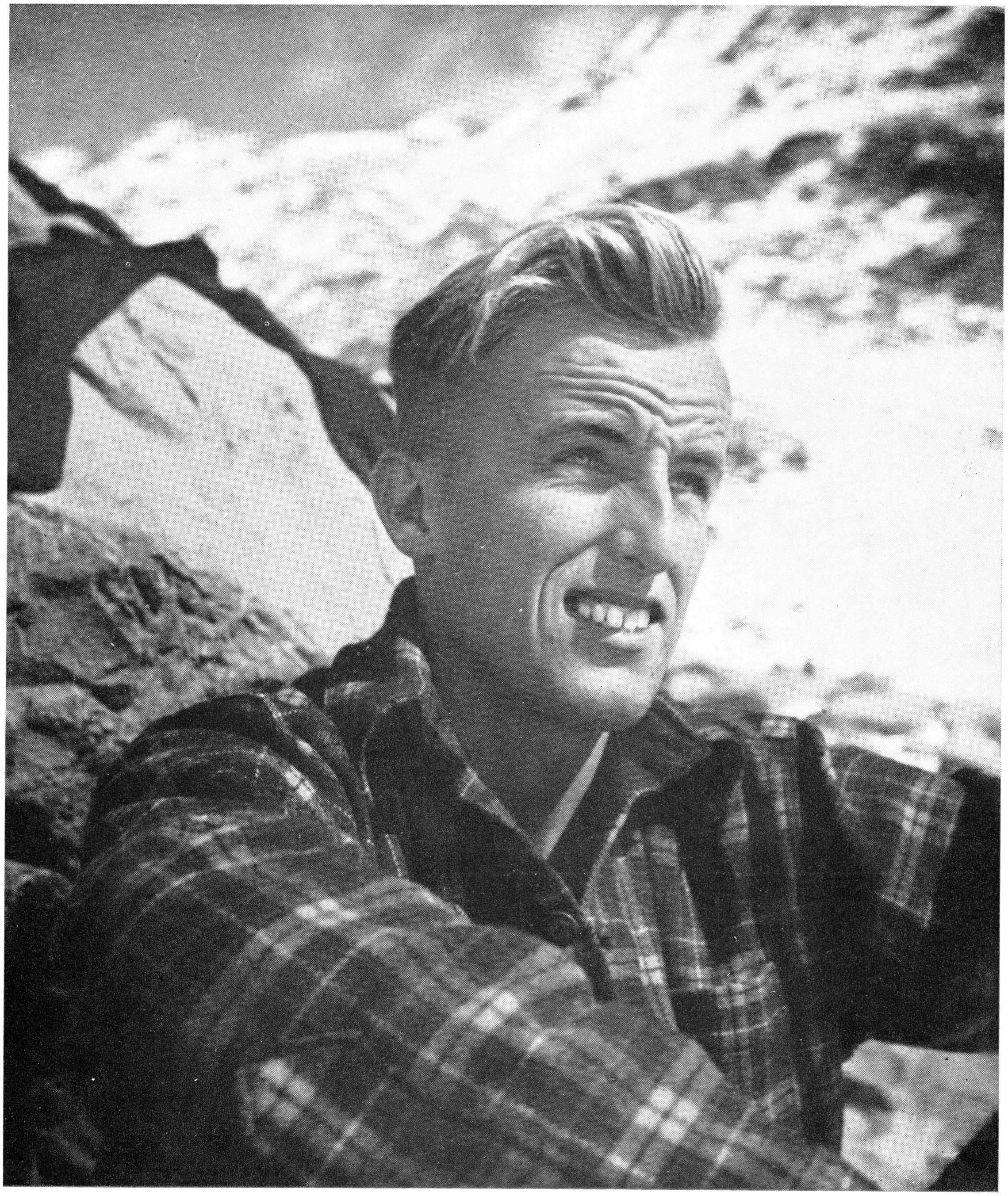
Banfield Hut, Arrowsmith Range

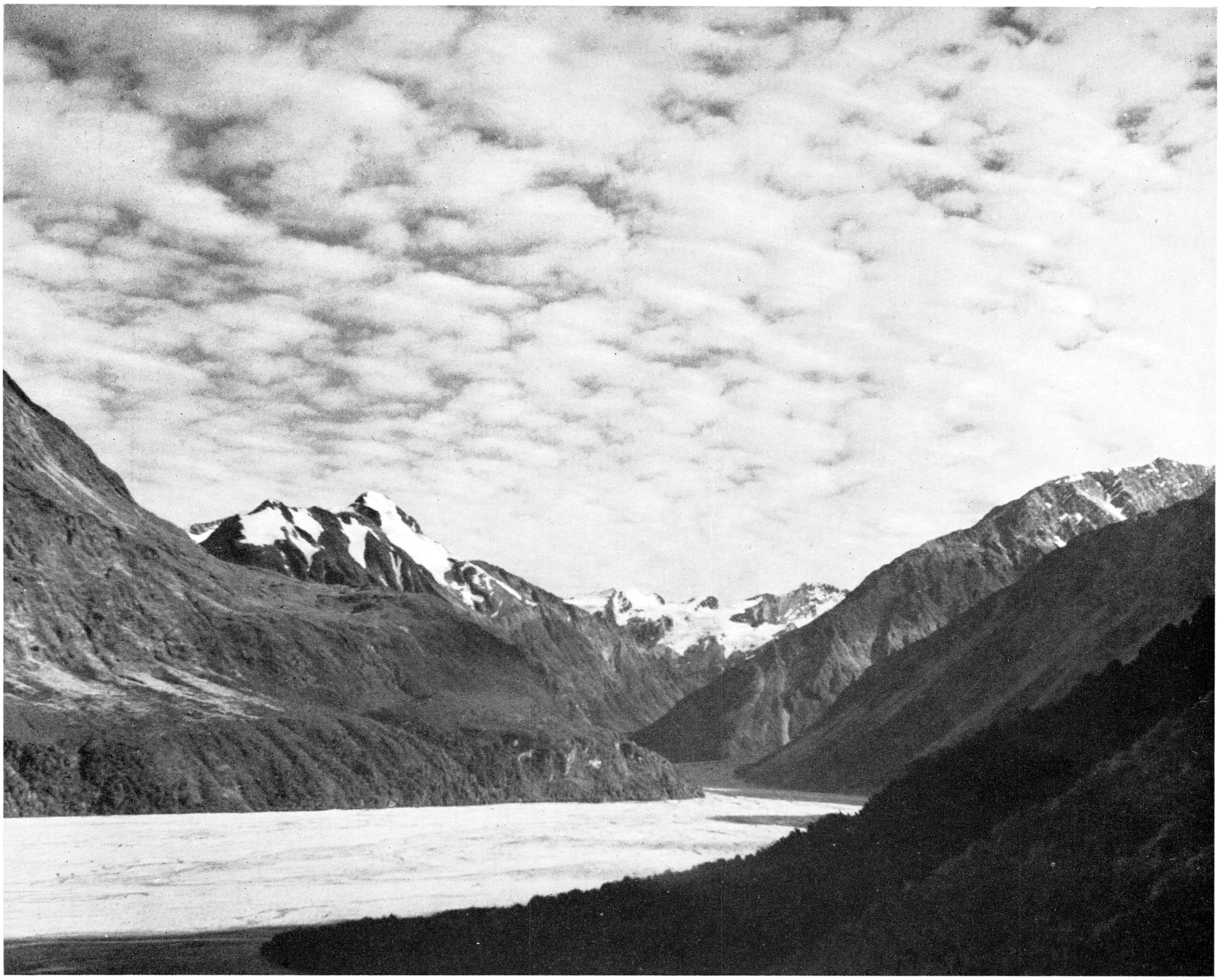




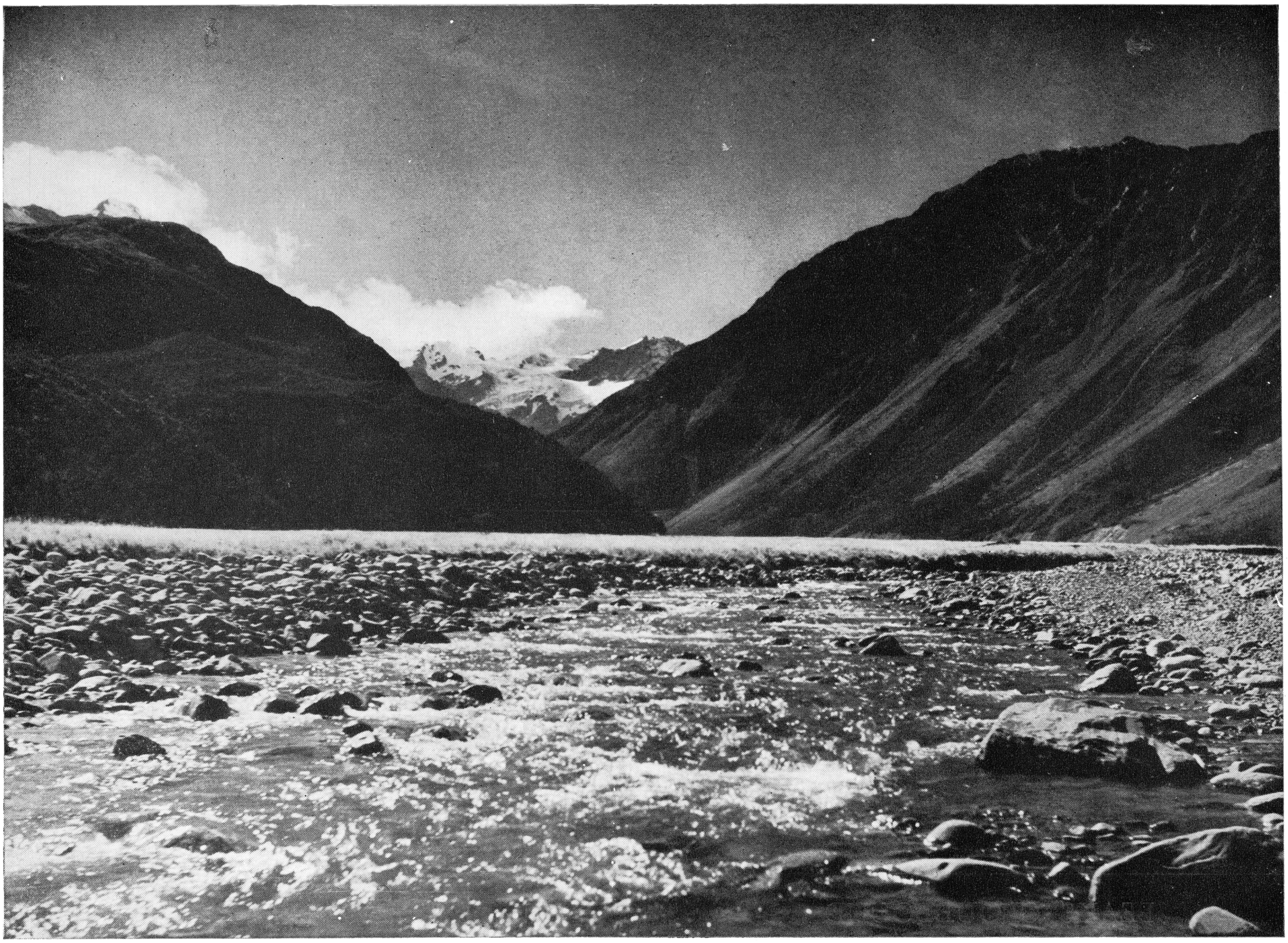
MAZE OF DISTANT RIDGES *From Gusty Col, Arrowsmith Range*

MOUNTAINEER SUNBOUND *Arrowsmith Range*

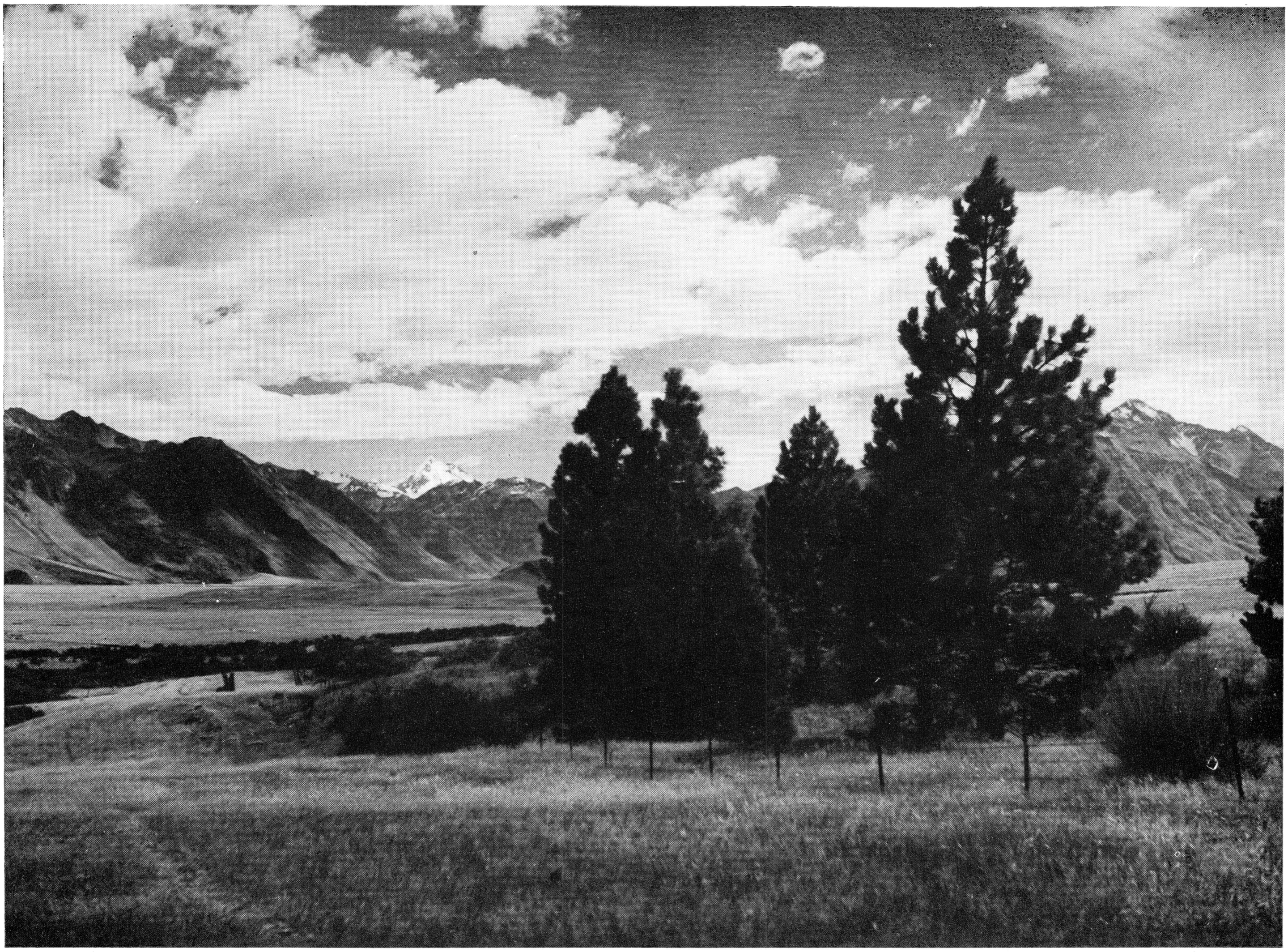




PEAKS CLOUDBOUND *Mounts Sword and Sceptre, Rangitata*



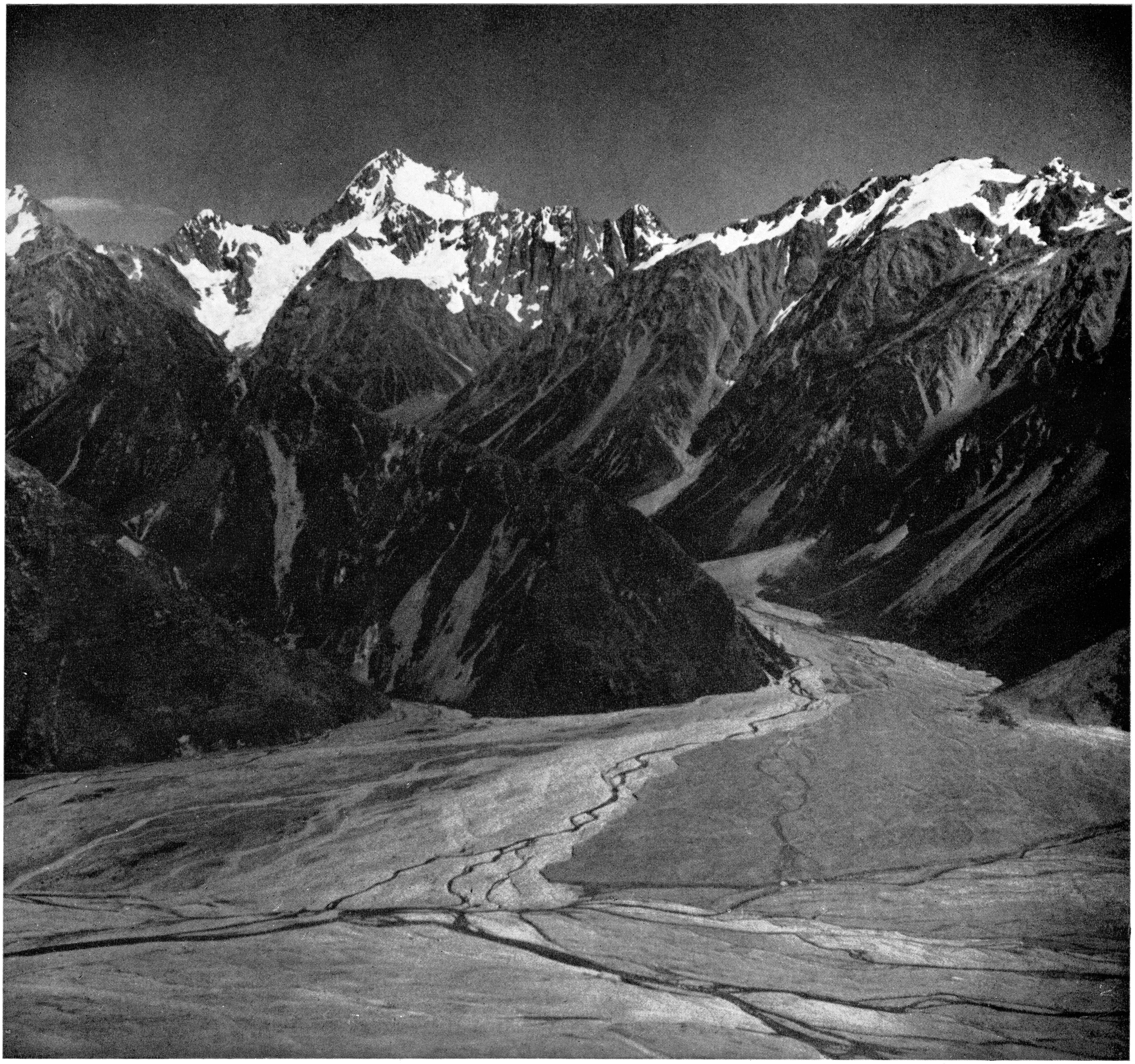
NATIVE HEATH *Havelock Valley, Rangitata*



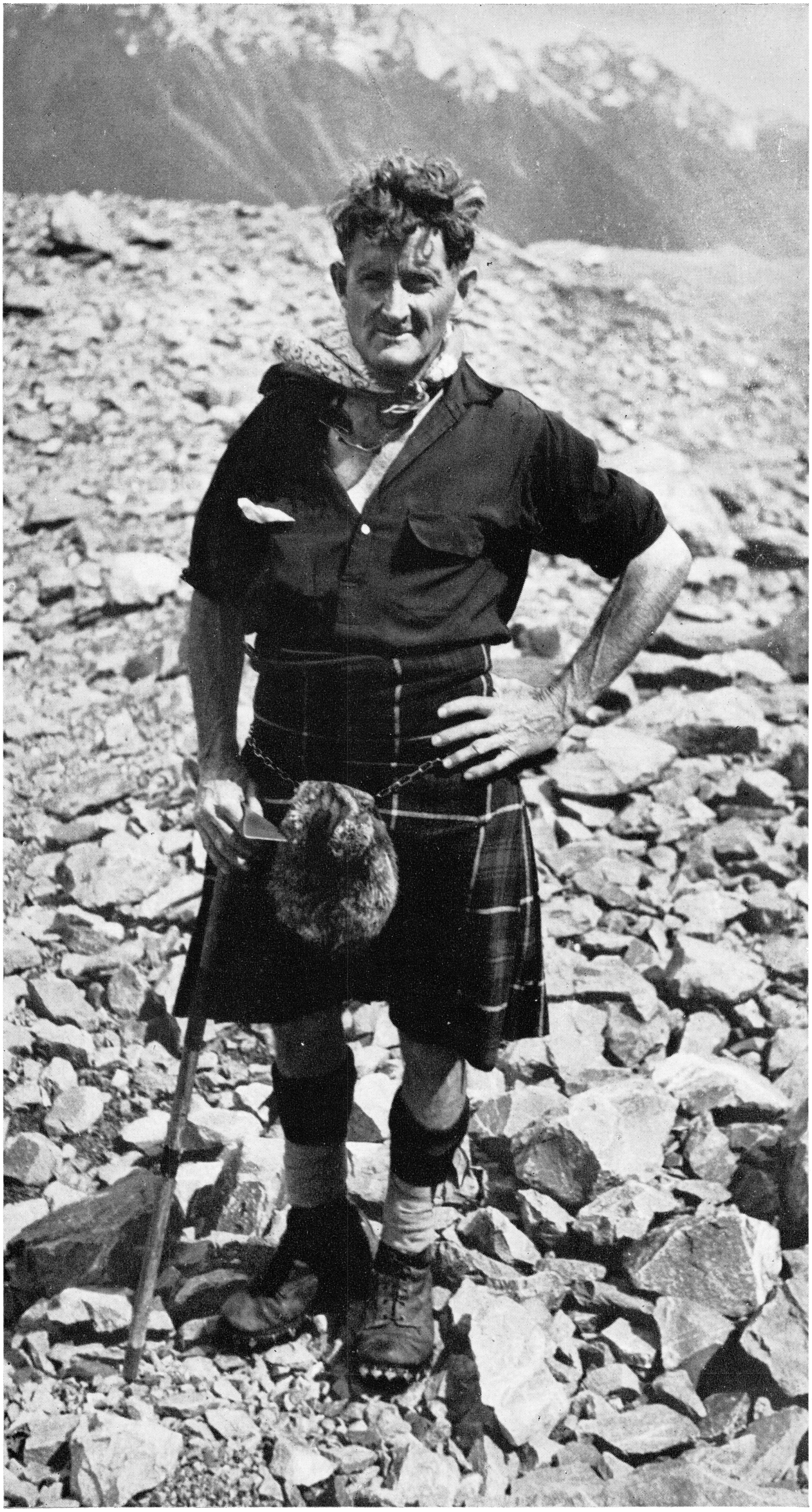
EXOTIC OASIS *Mount D'Archiac in distance, Rangitata*

OUTSIDE THE ICE CAVE *Havelock Glacier, Rangitata*

INSIDE THE ICE CAVE *Havelock Glacier, Rangitata*

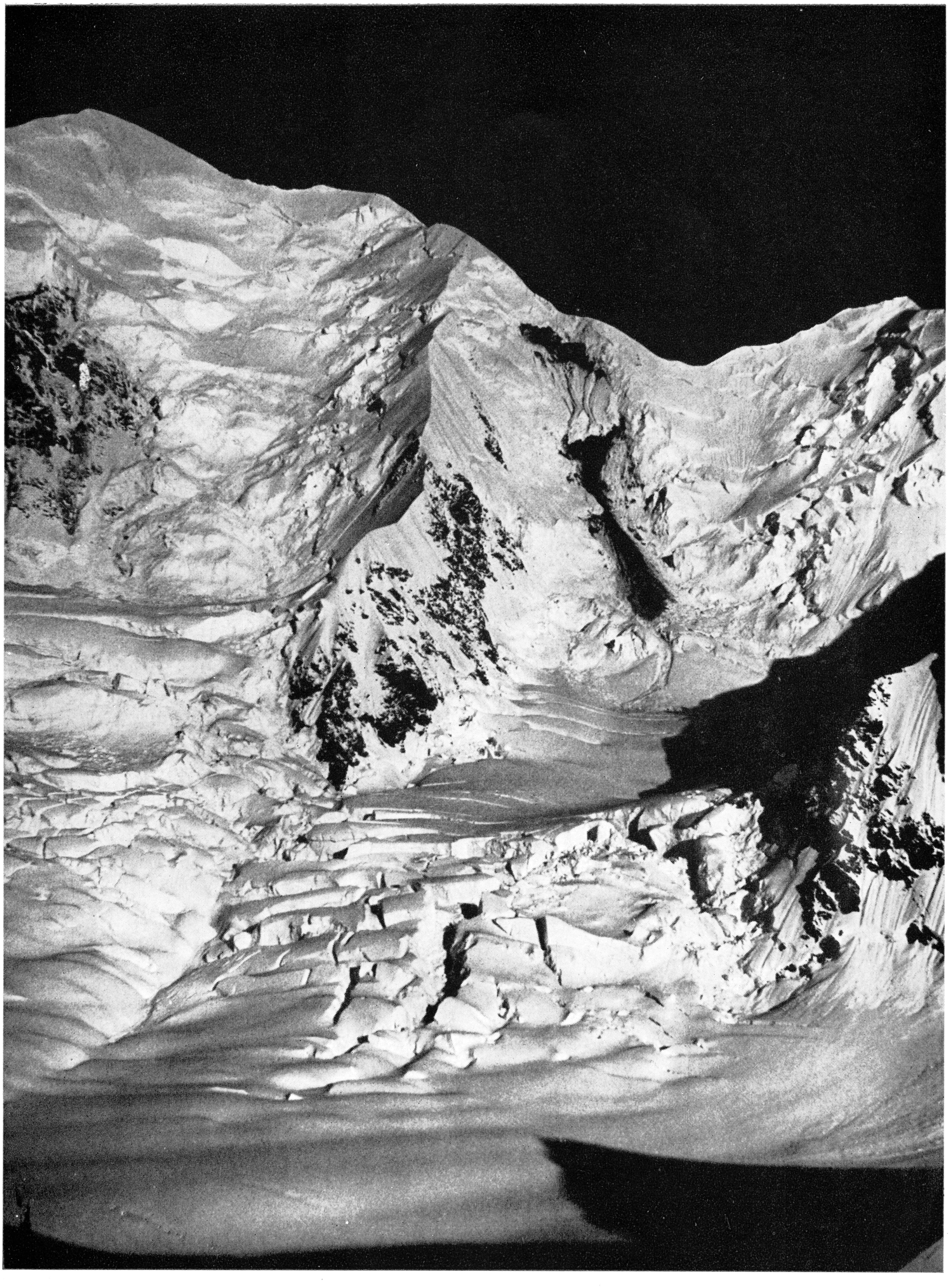


MOUNTAIN ART *Mount D'Archiac and Havelock Valley*

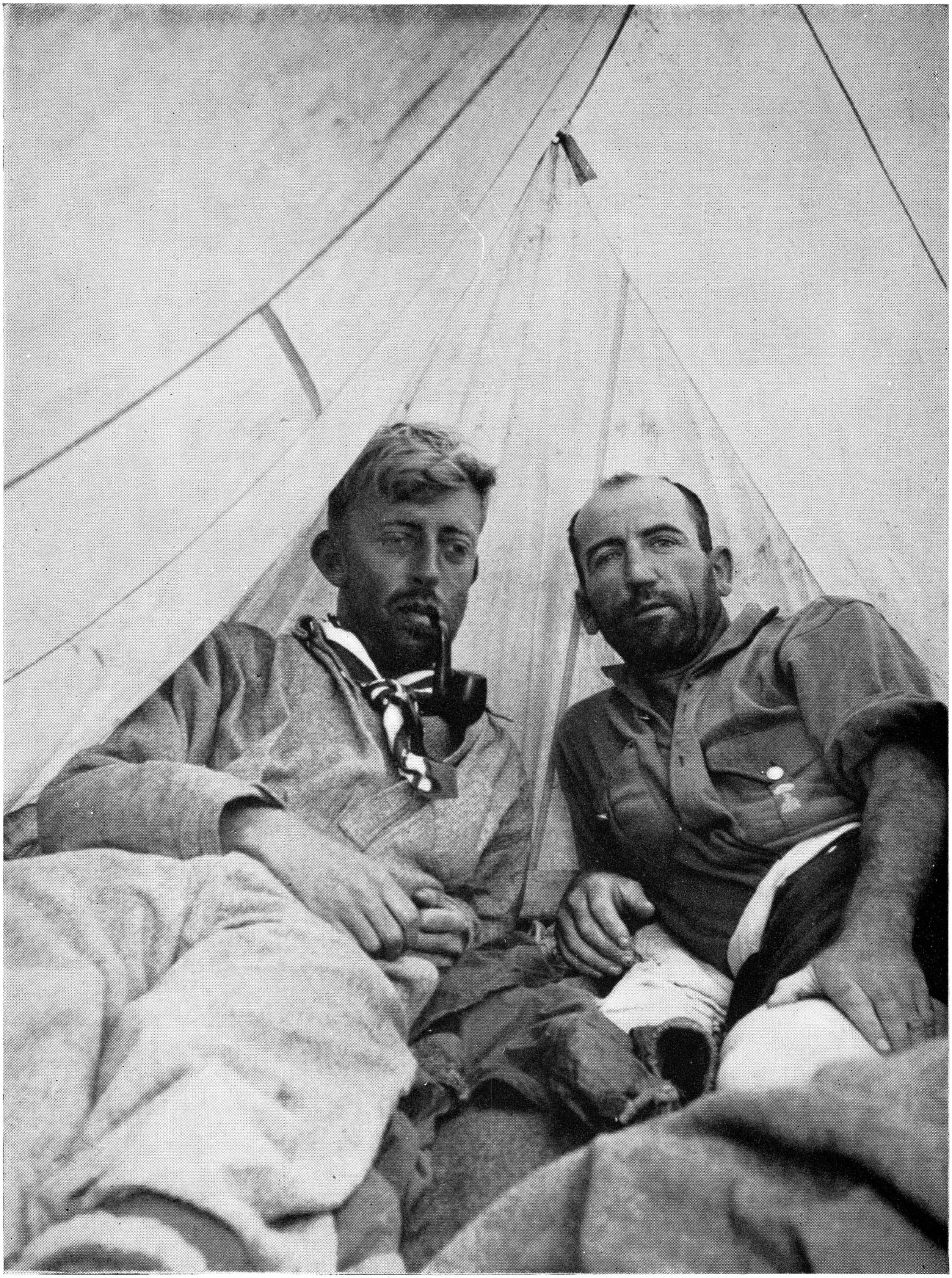


MOUNTAIN ARTIST

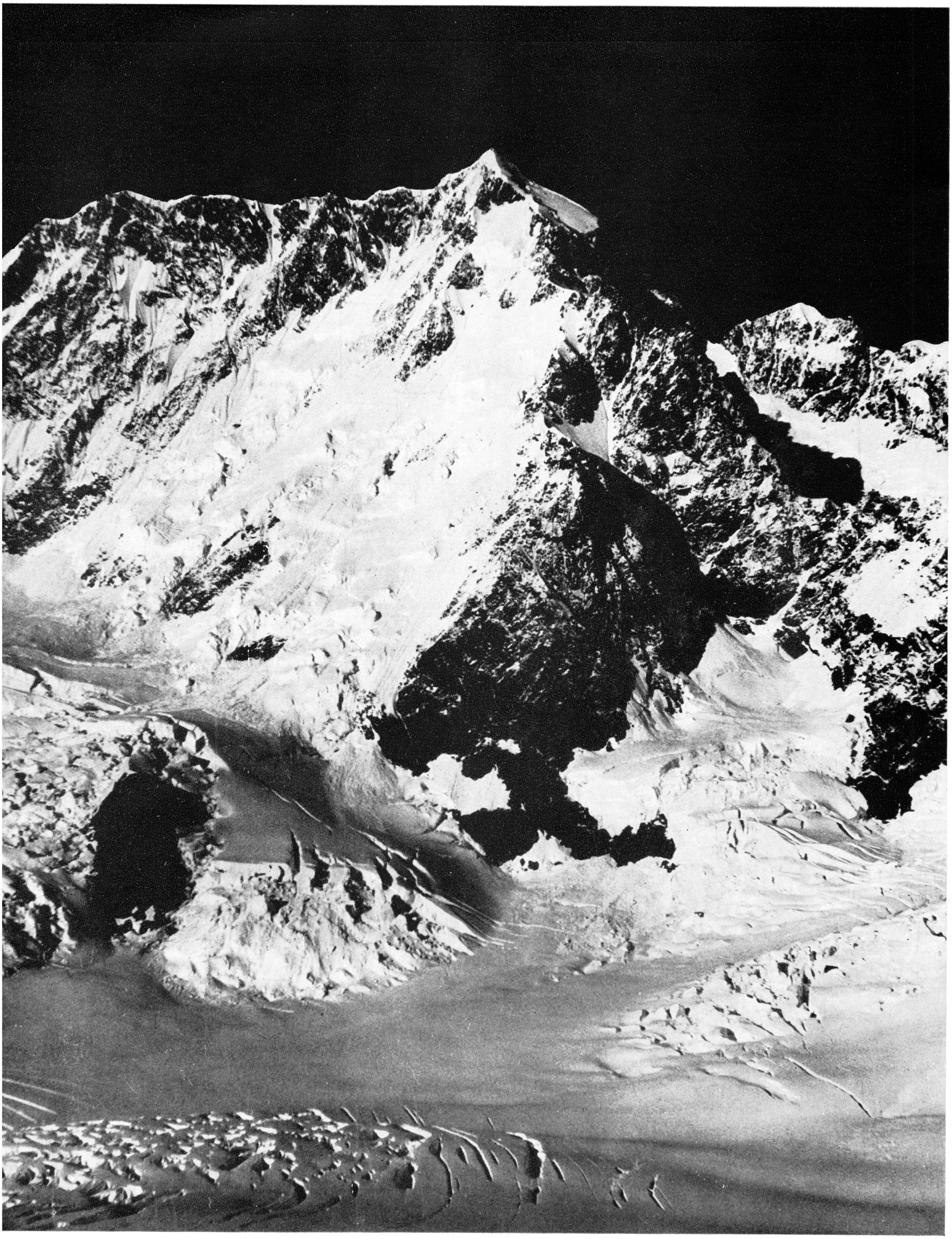
Tasman Moraine



BELOW THE ICE WALLS *Mount Tasman from Glacier Dome*



BENEATH THE TENT *Haast Ridge, Tasman Valley*

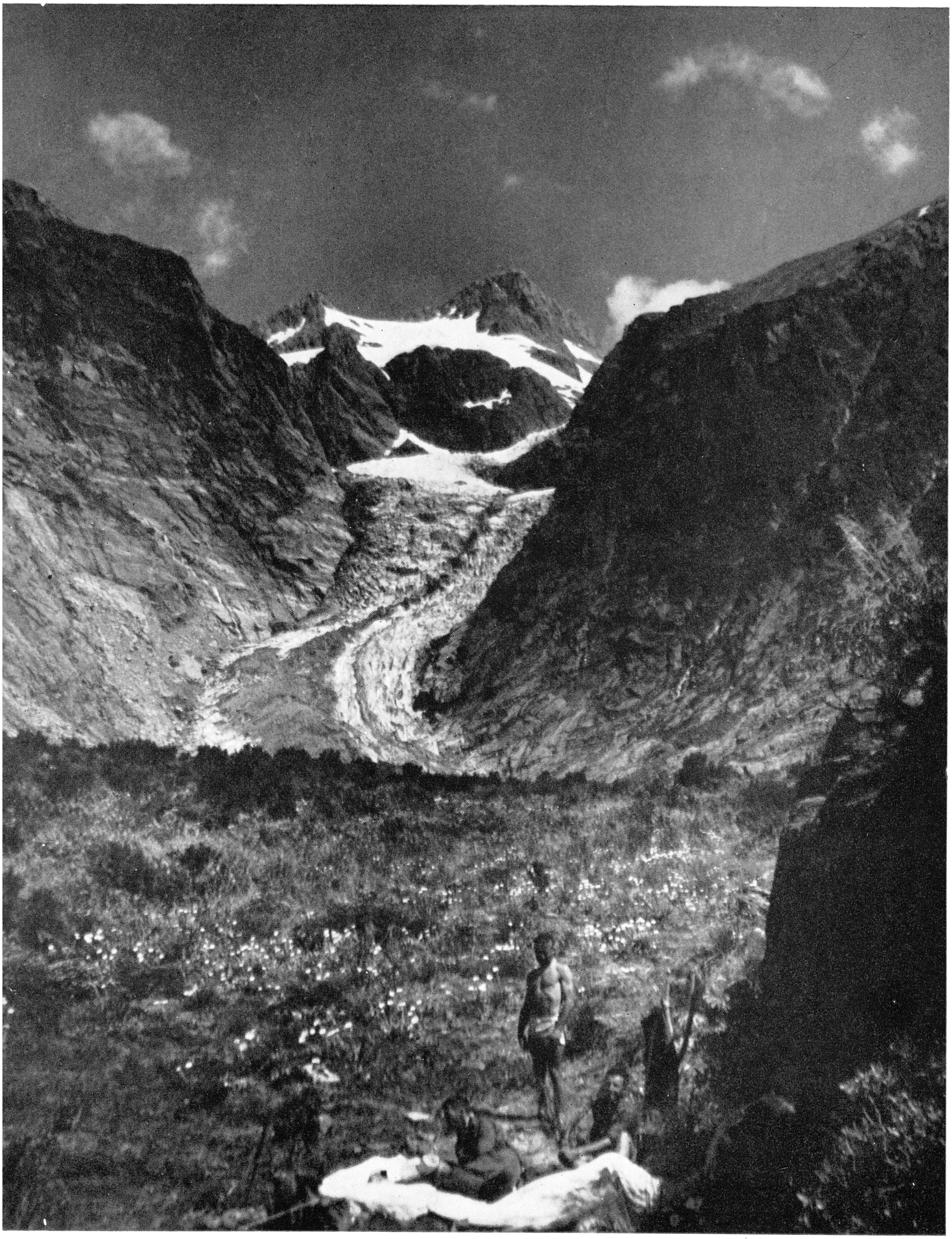


MASS

Mount Cook from Glacier Dome

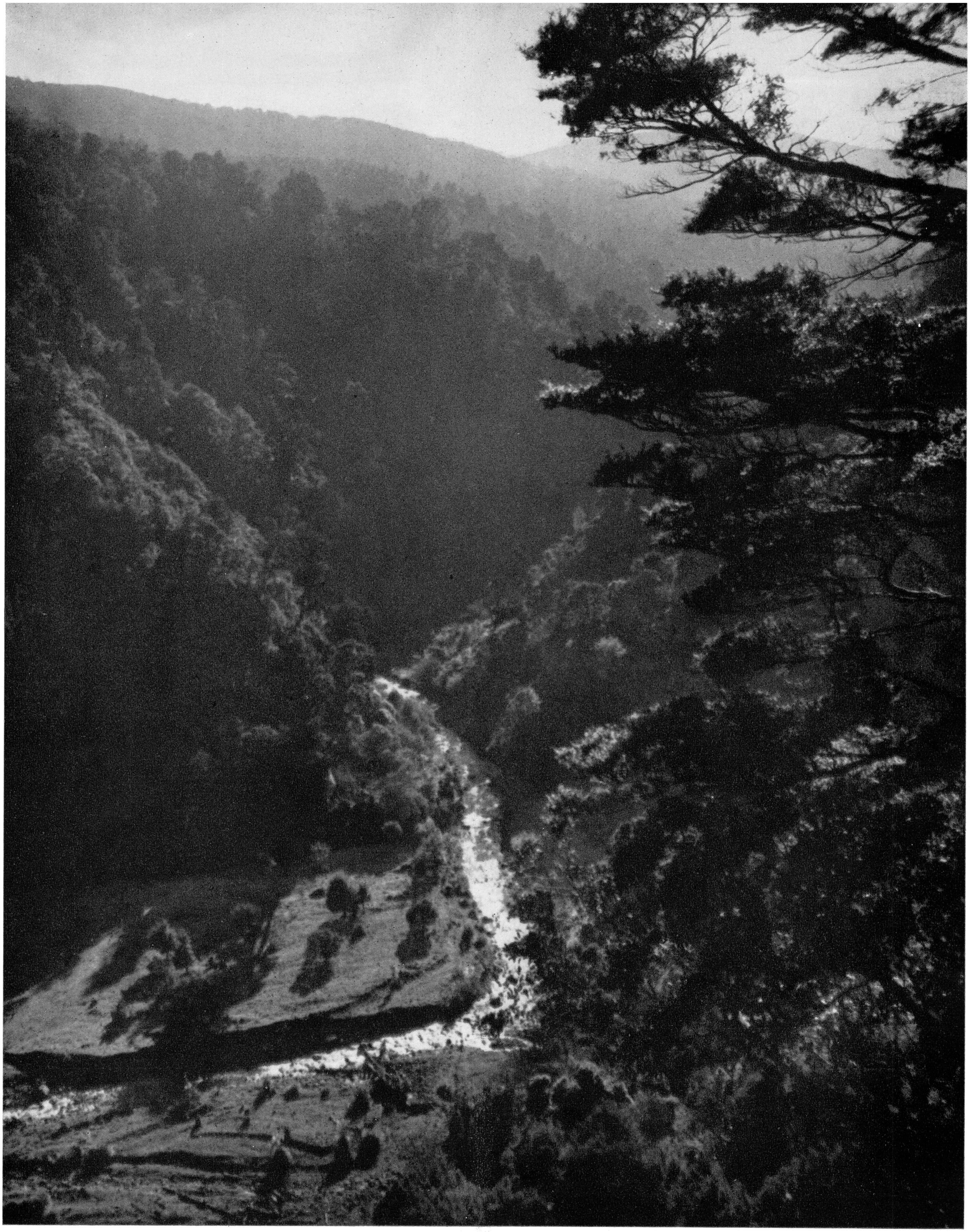
DIGNITY

Mount Cook
from near Silberhorn

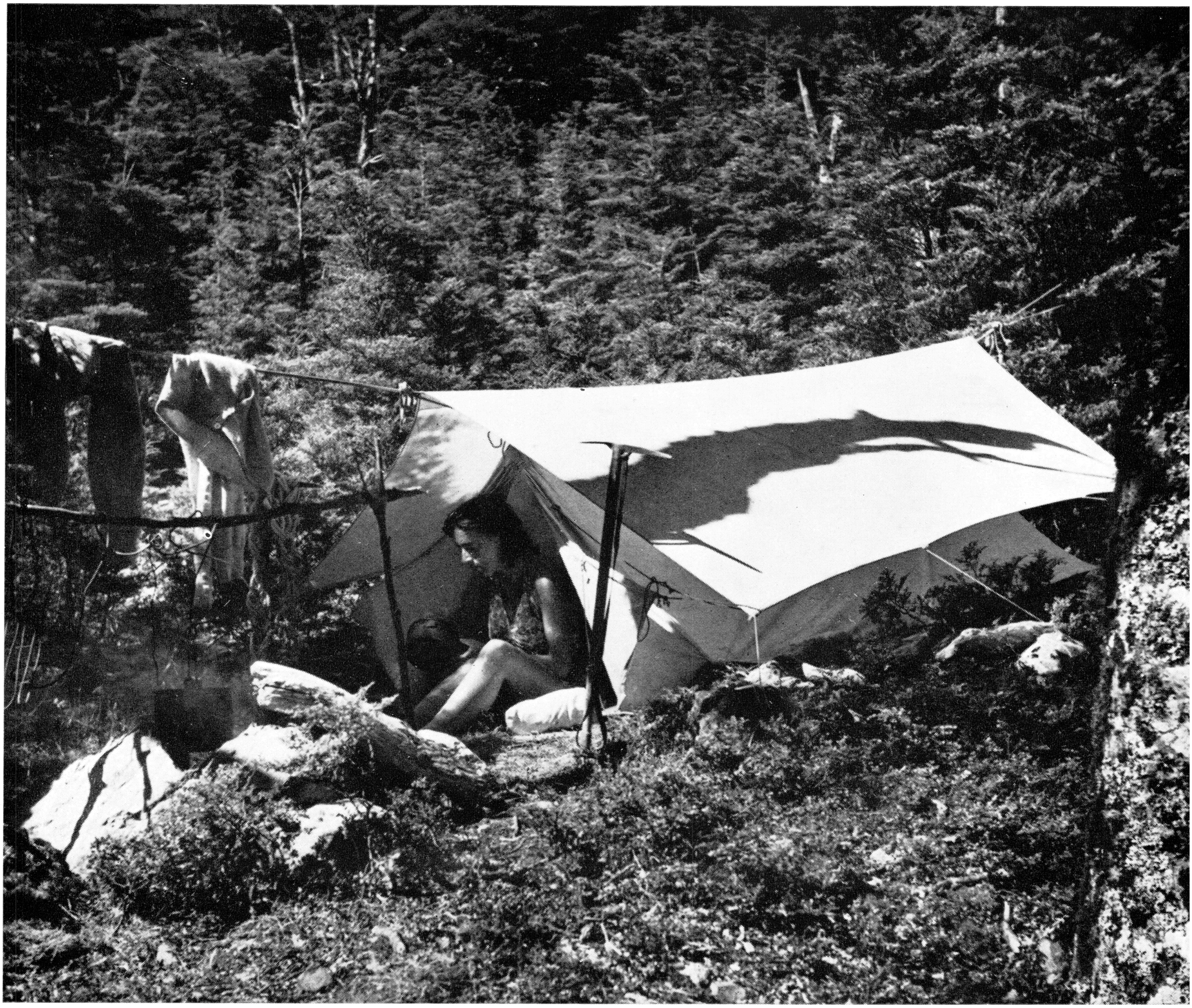


FIRST EXPLORATION *Guardian Peak above the Adams Valley*

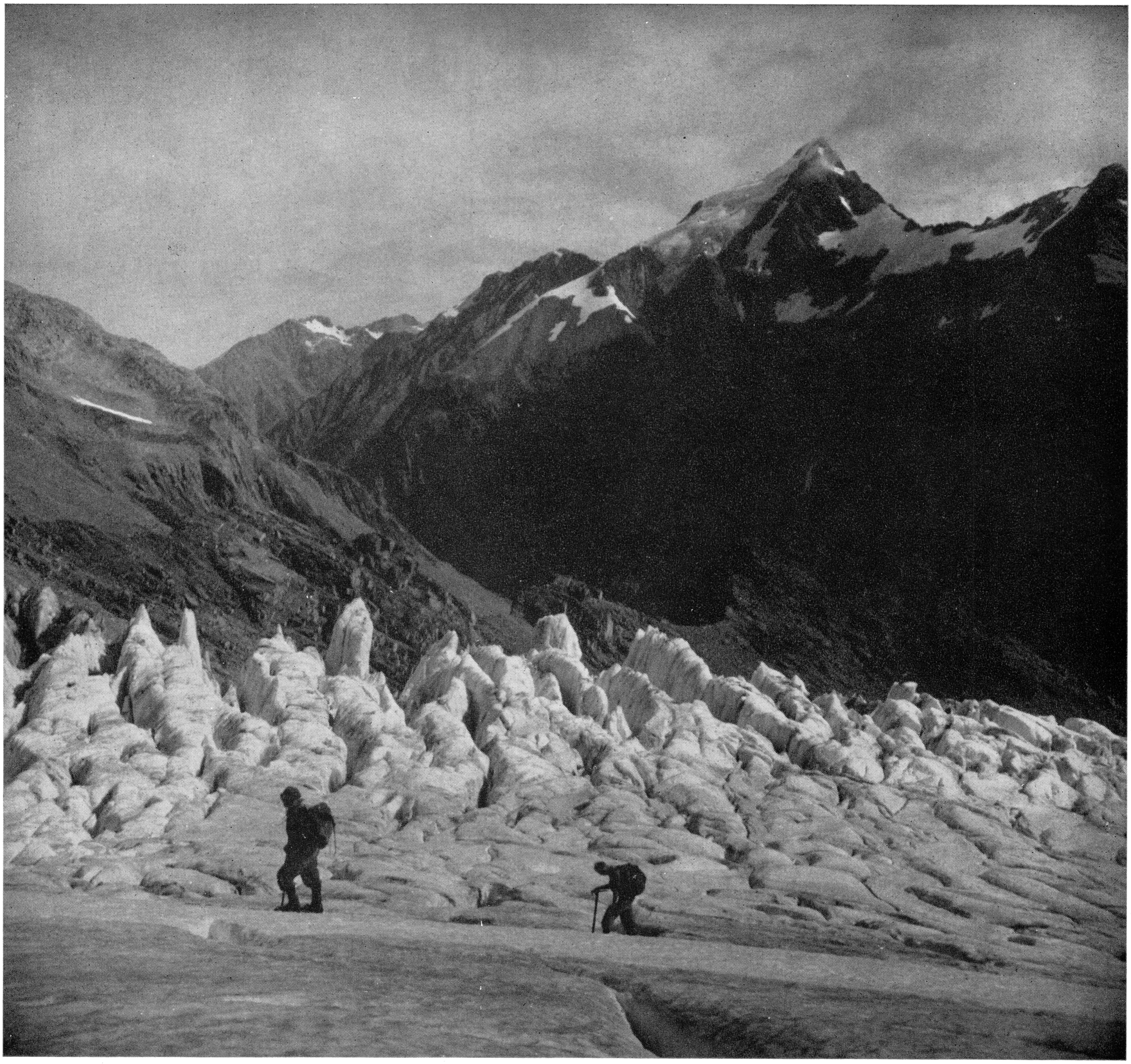
SUNLIGHT *Tararua Ranges*



ANZAC MORNING *Orongorongo, Rimutaka Range*



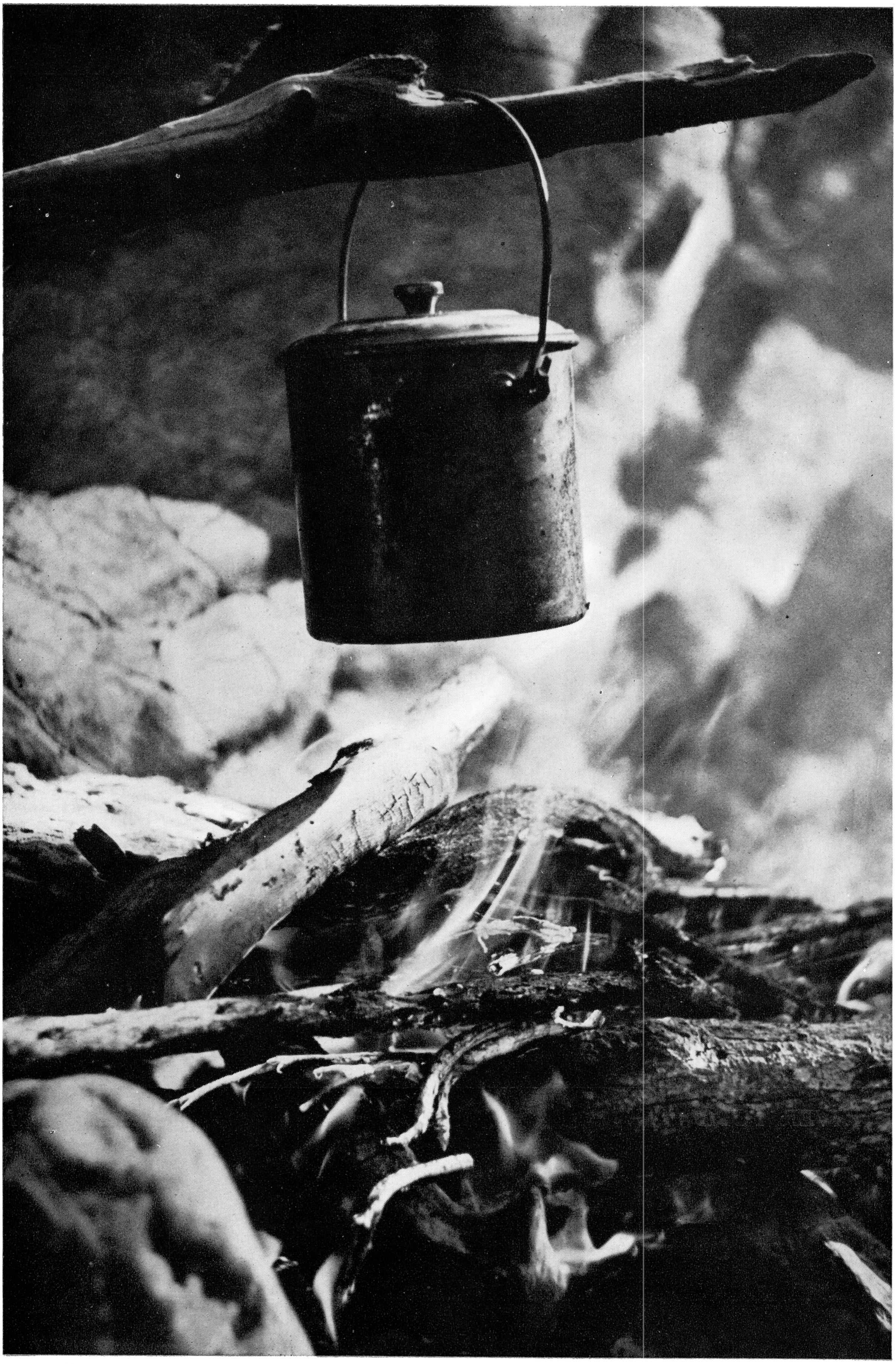
DECEMBER AFTERNOON *Waimakariri Valley*



GLACIER ASCENT *Mount Sword from Havelock Glacier, Rangitata*

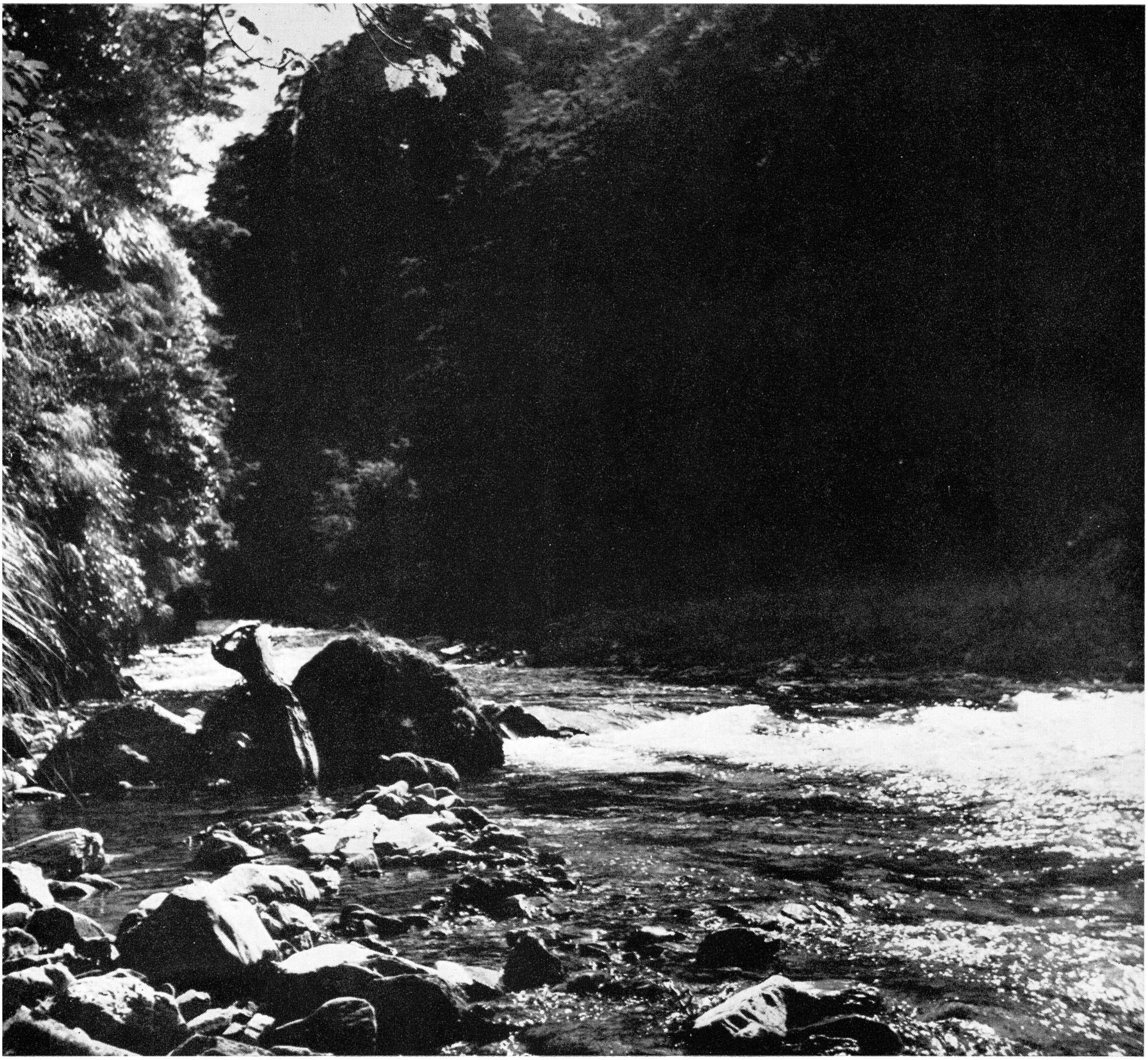
RIVER DESCENT *Anti-Crow, Waimakariri Valley*

BREAKFAST *Deception Valley, Otira*

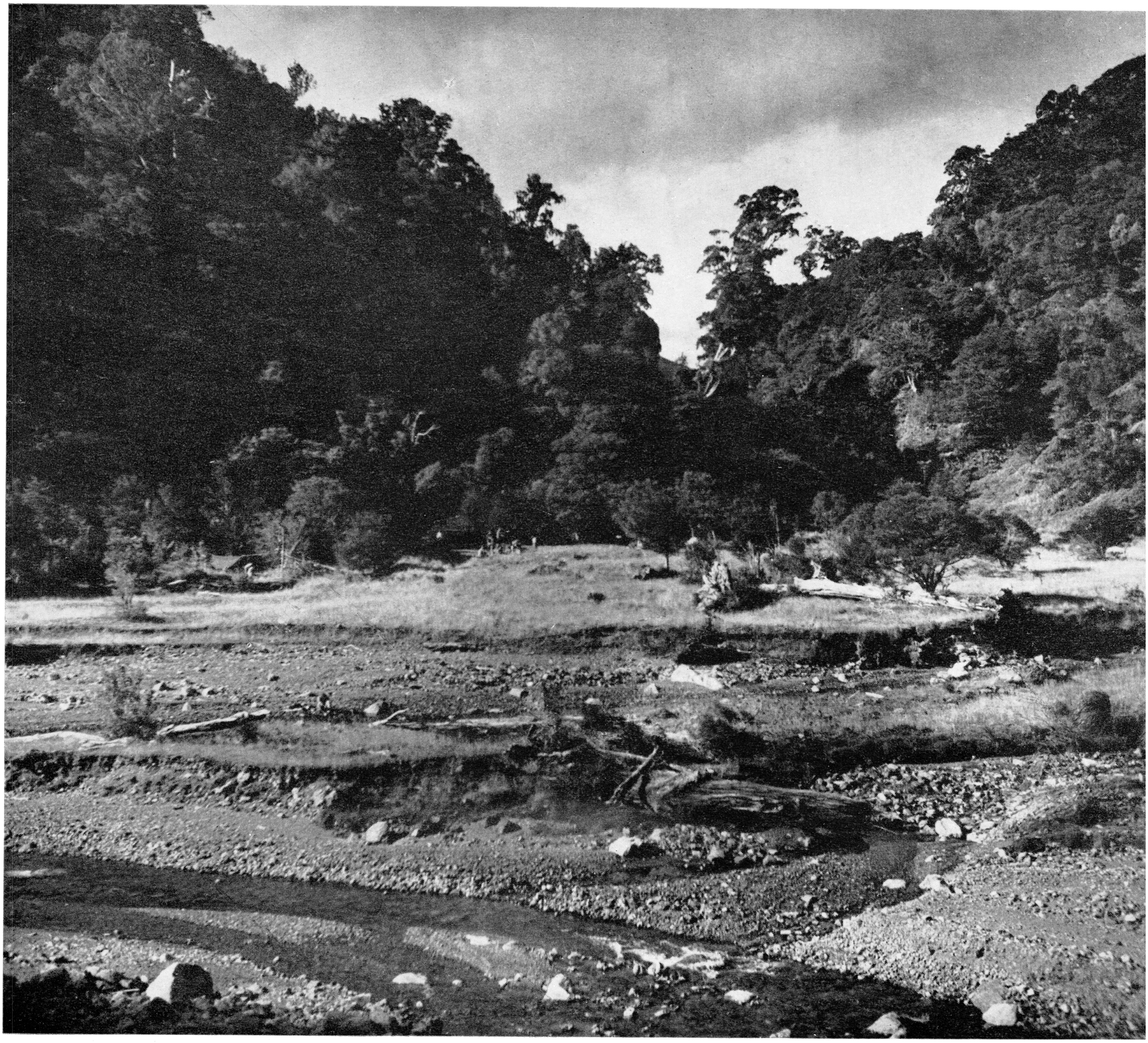


BREW

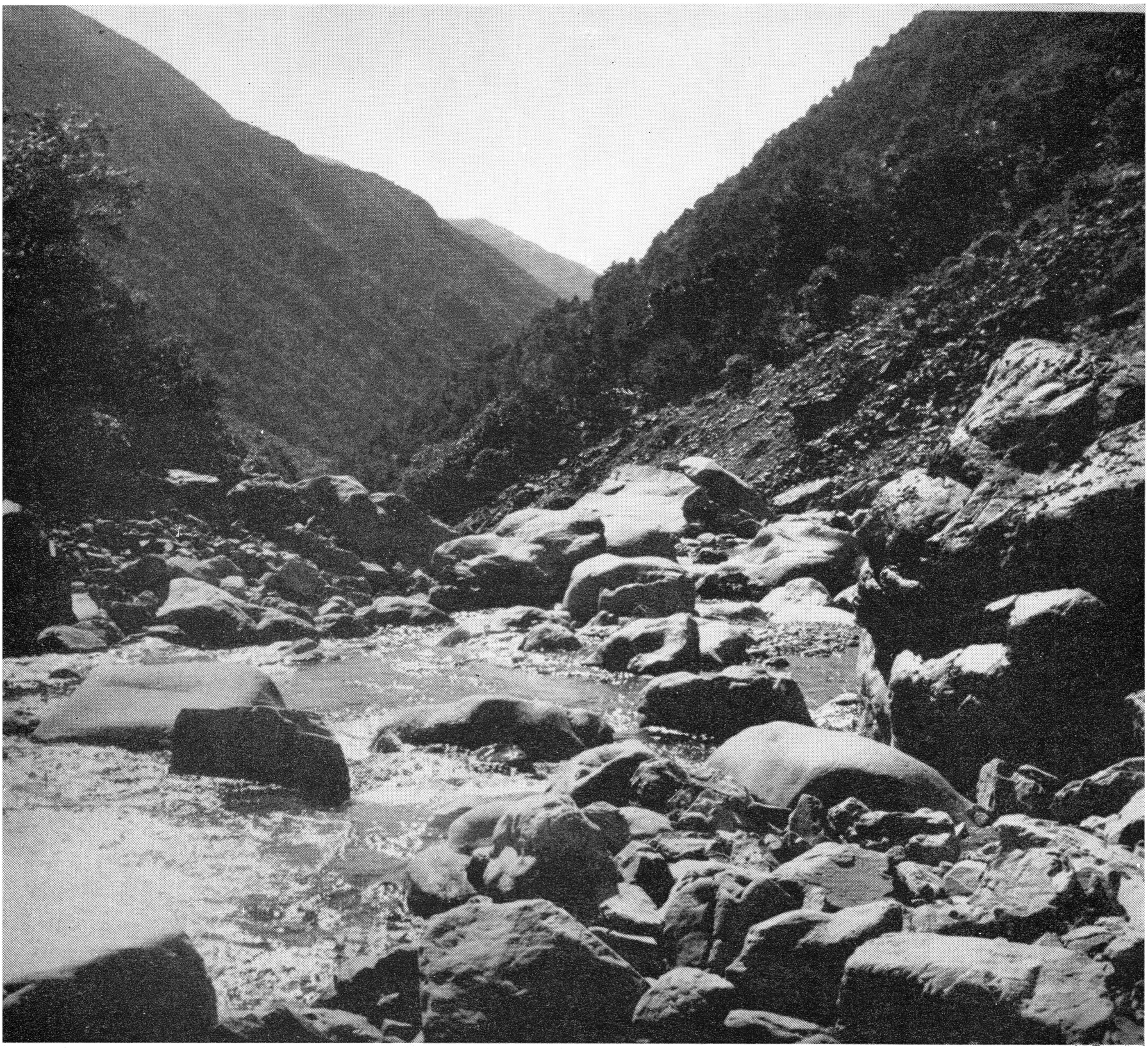
Fitzroy Bay,
Wellington



RIVER FORD *Cannibal Gorge, Maruia*

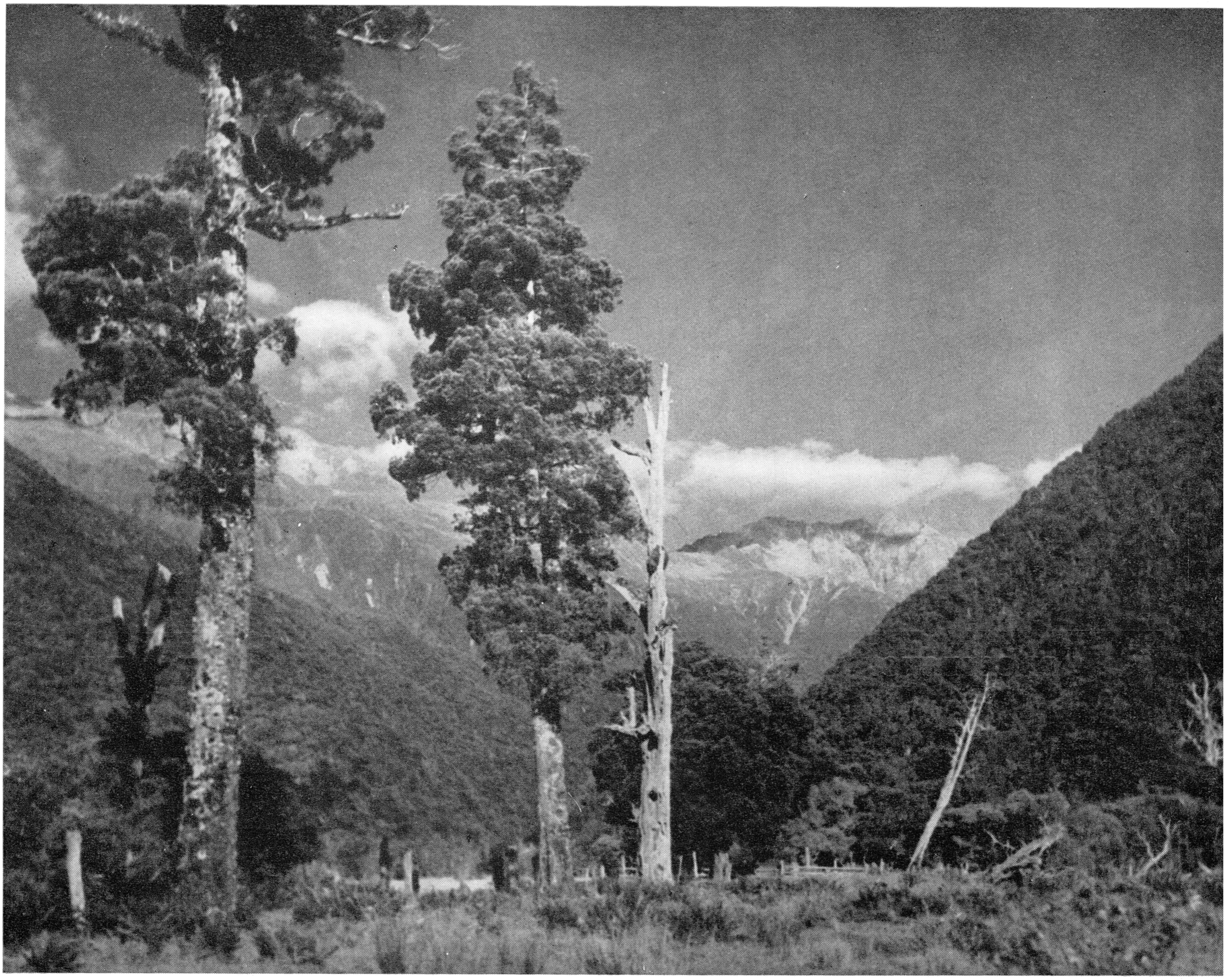


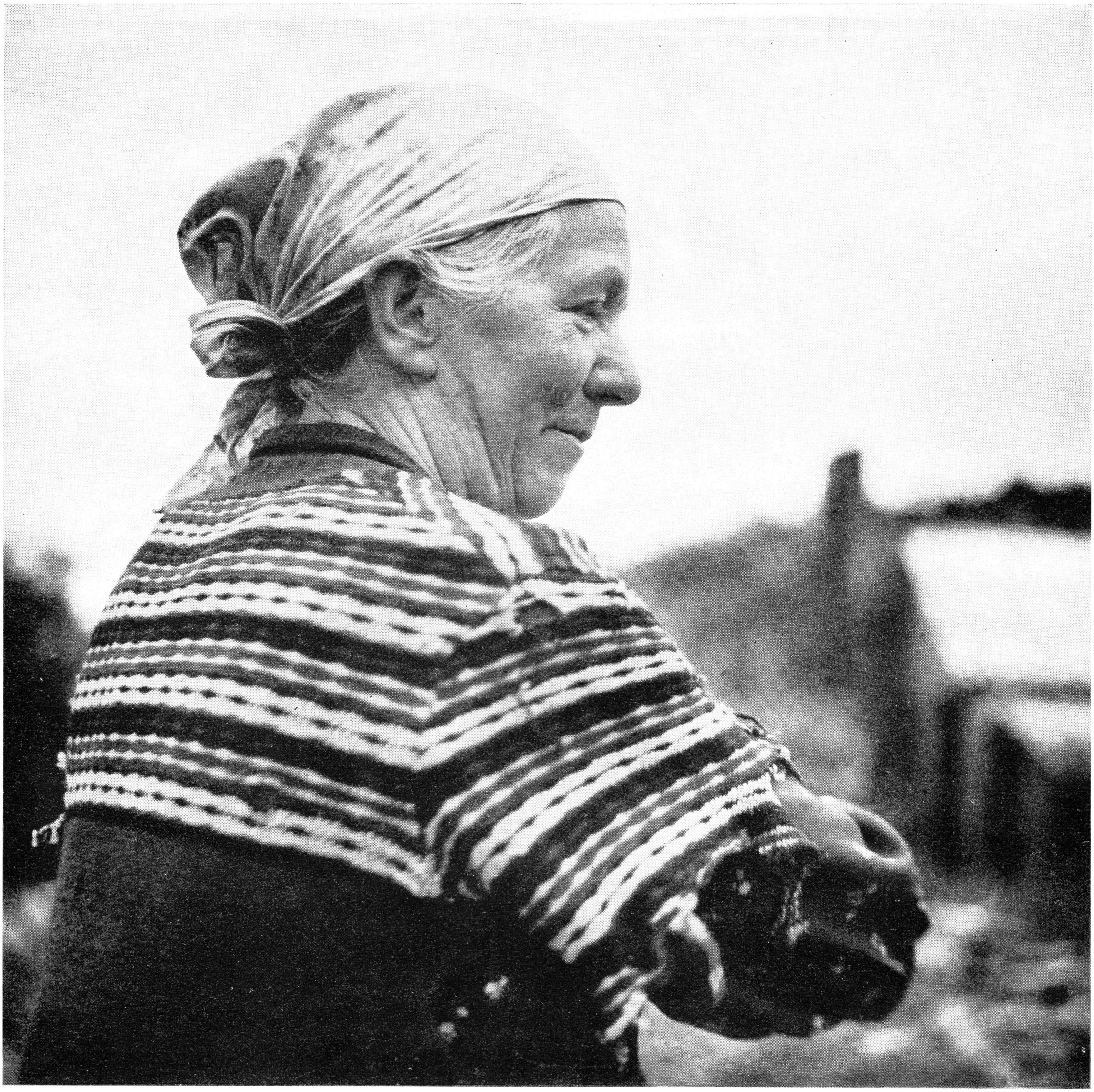
RIVER FLATS *Orongorongo, Rimutaka Range*



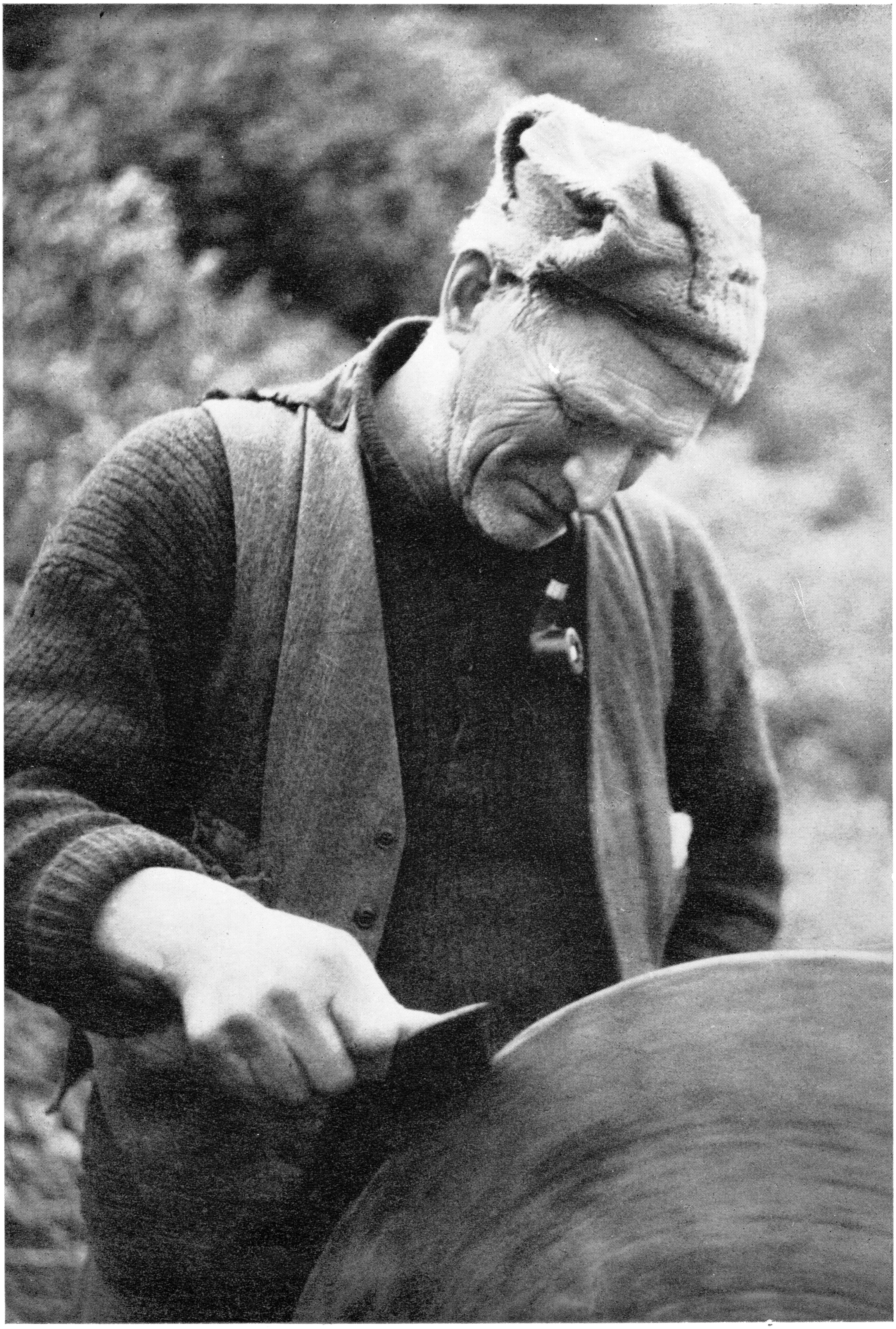
UPPER REACHES *Deception Valley near Goat Pass*

LOWER REACHES *Near Otira*

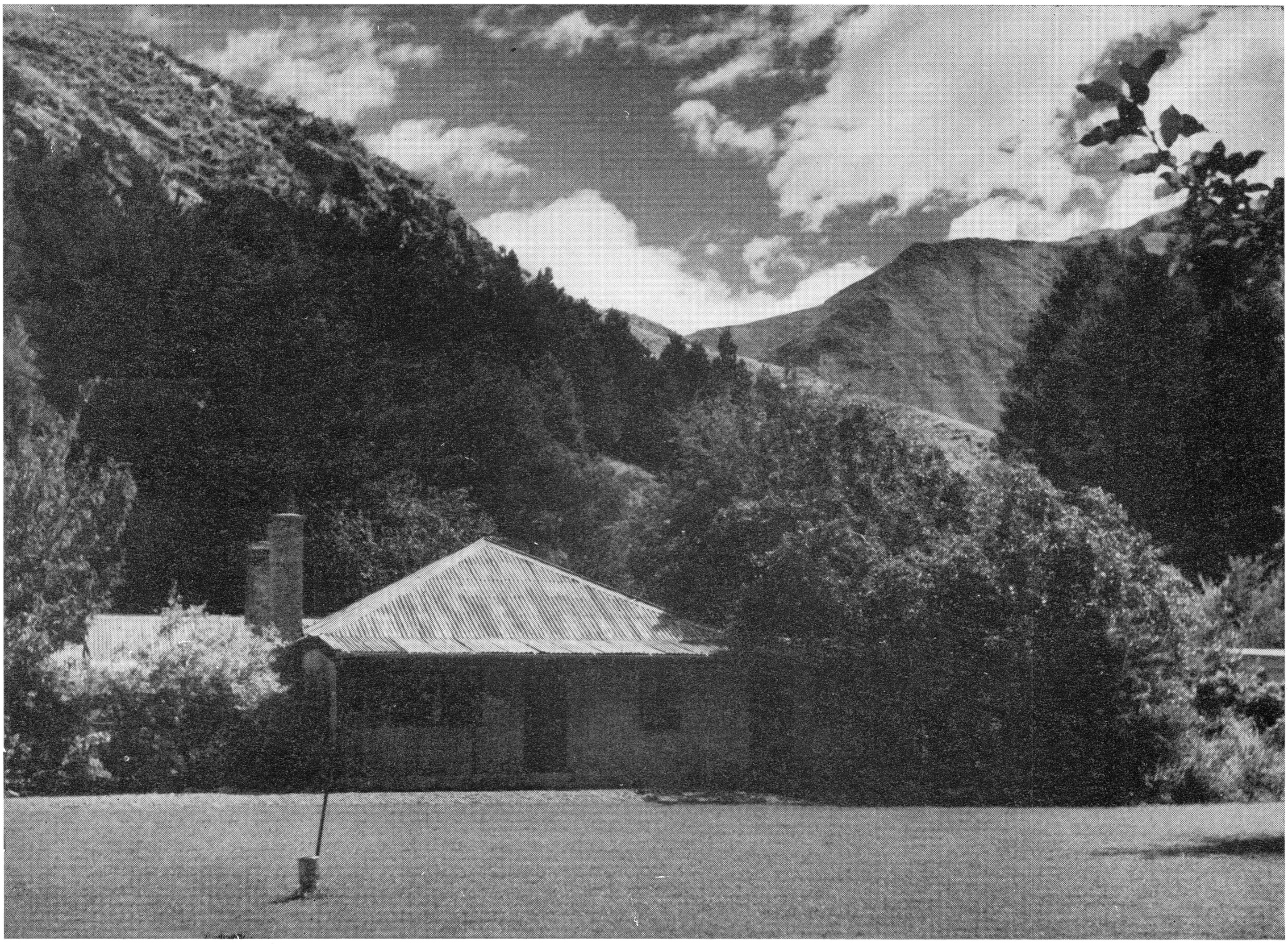




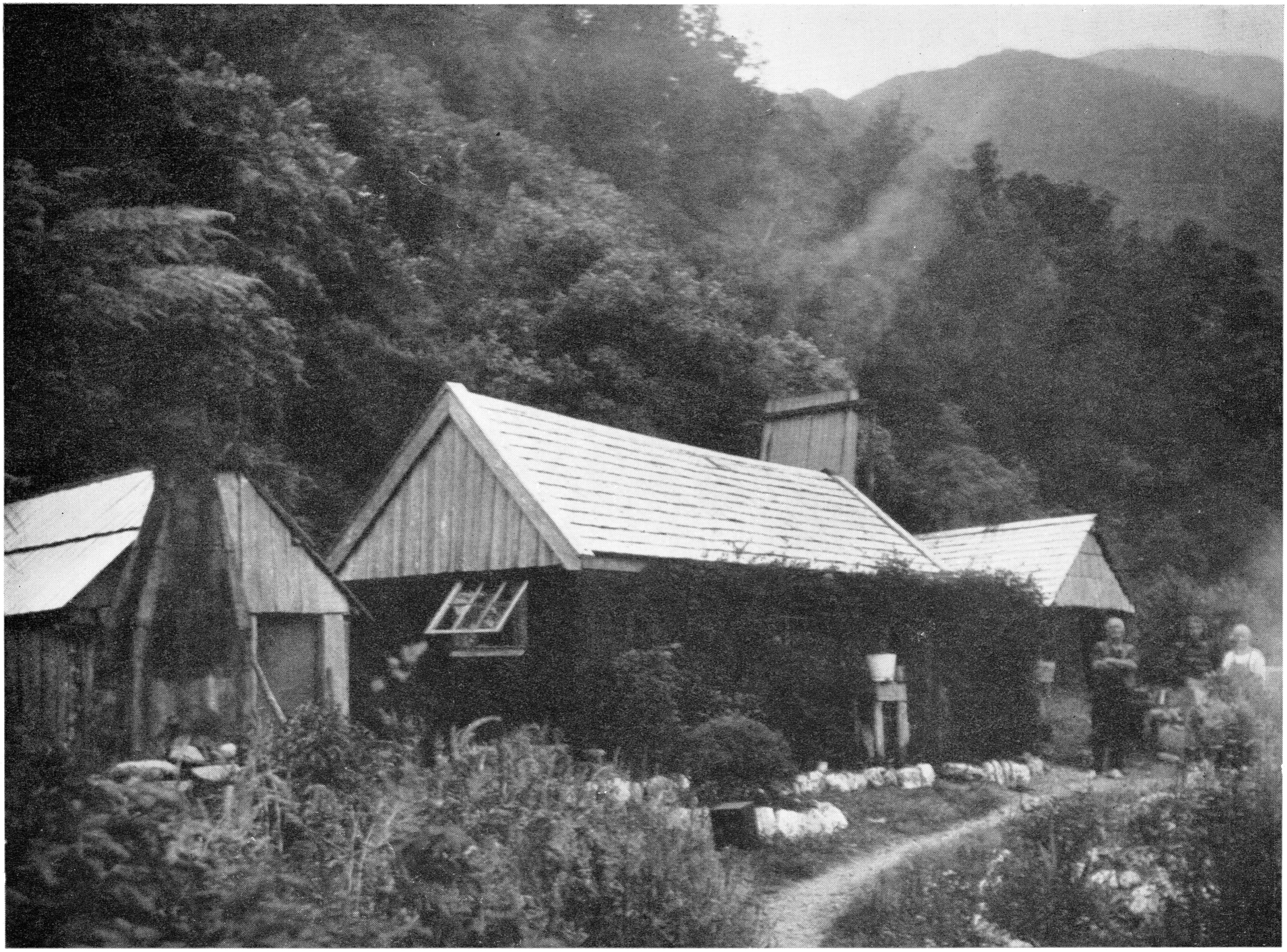
PROSPECTOR'S WIFE *Taipo Valley*



GOLD PROSPECTOR *Taipo Valley*

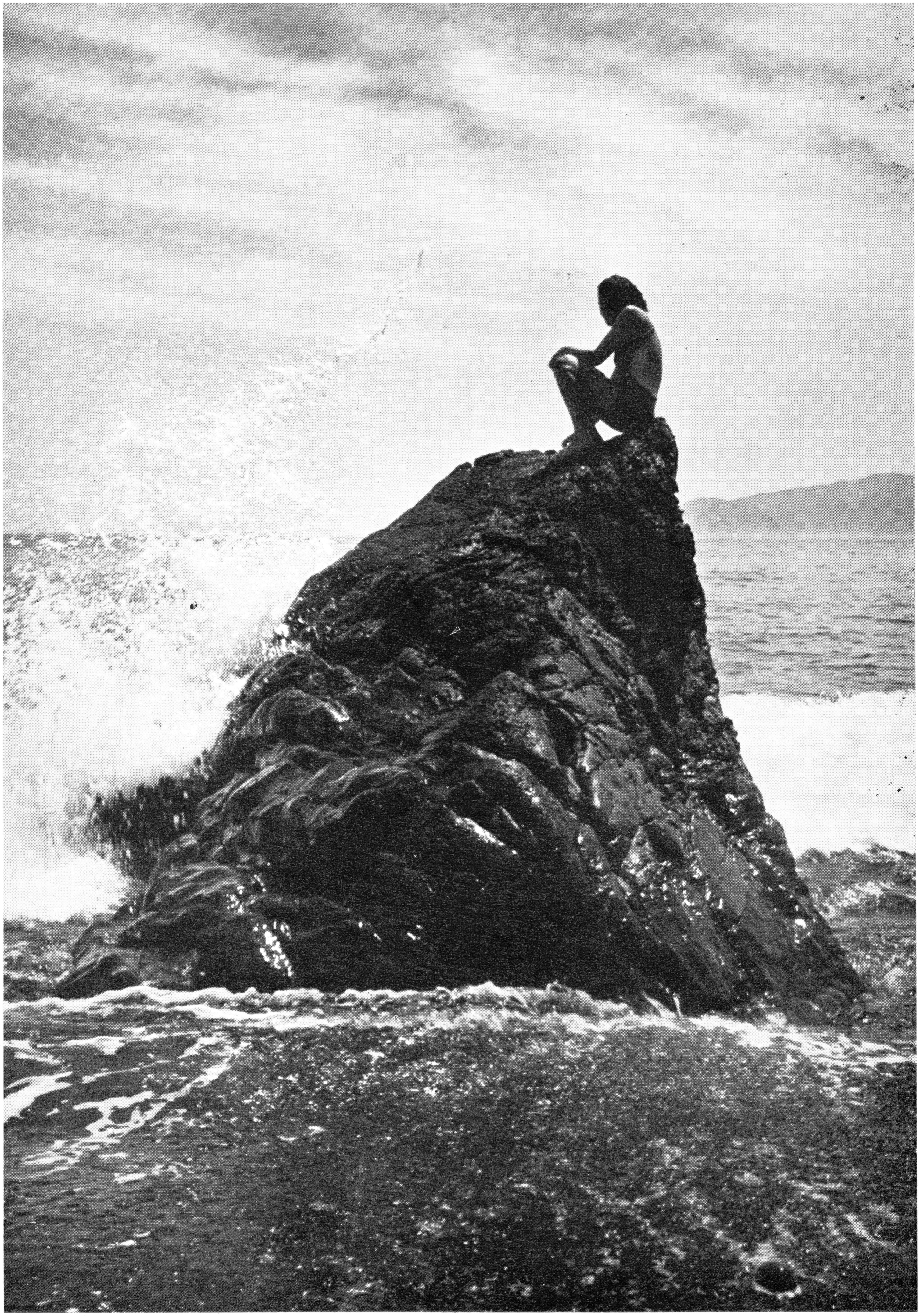


SHEEPMAN'S HOME *Erewhon, Rangitata Valley*



PROSPECTOR'S HOME *Taipo Valley*

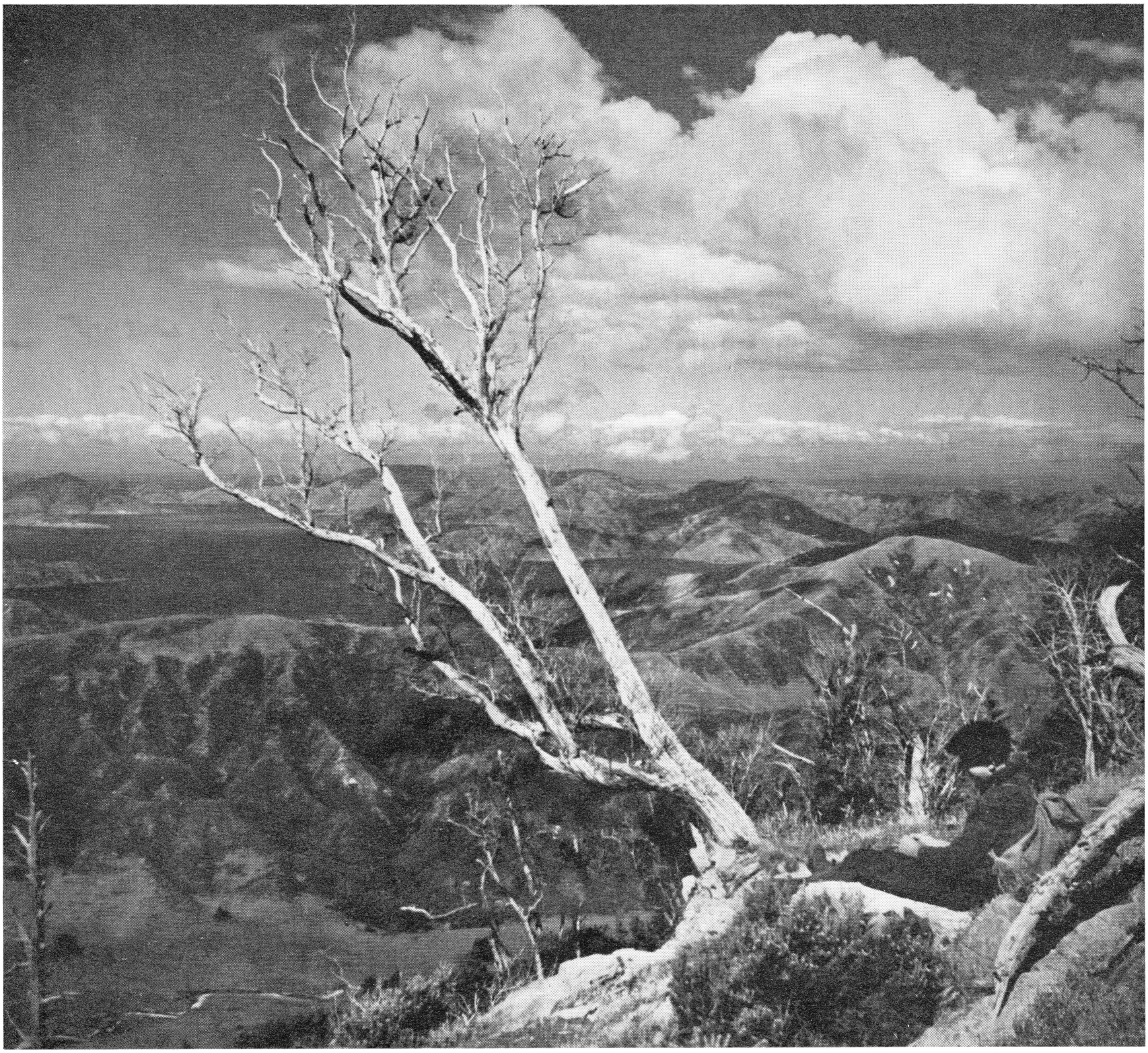
NORTH ISLAND FROM THE SOUTH *Sunrise from Mount Stokes, Marlborough Sounds*



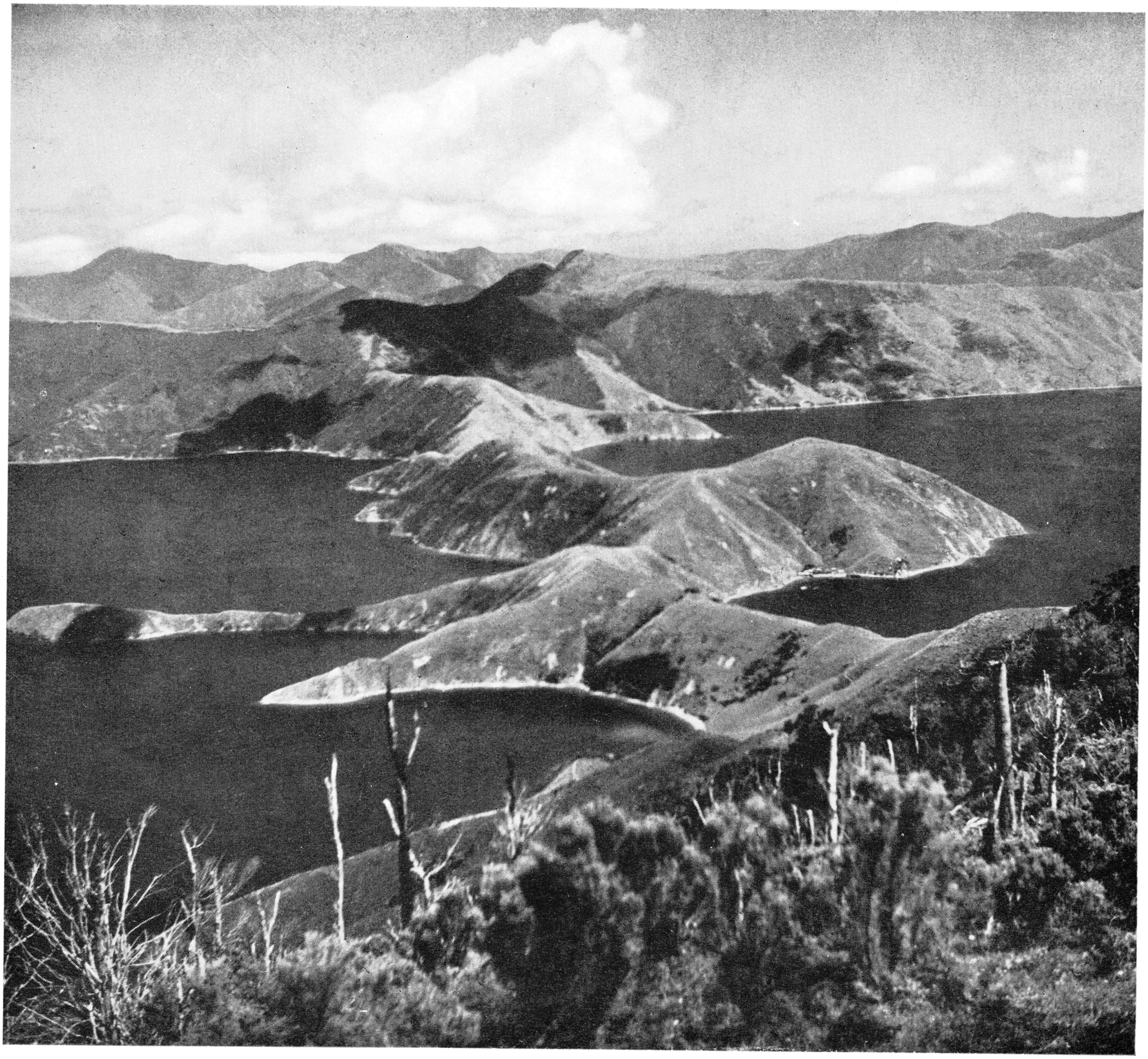
OPEN SEA *Fitzroy Bay, Wellington*

INLAND SEA

Pelorus Sound

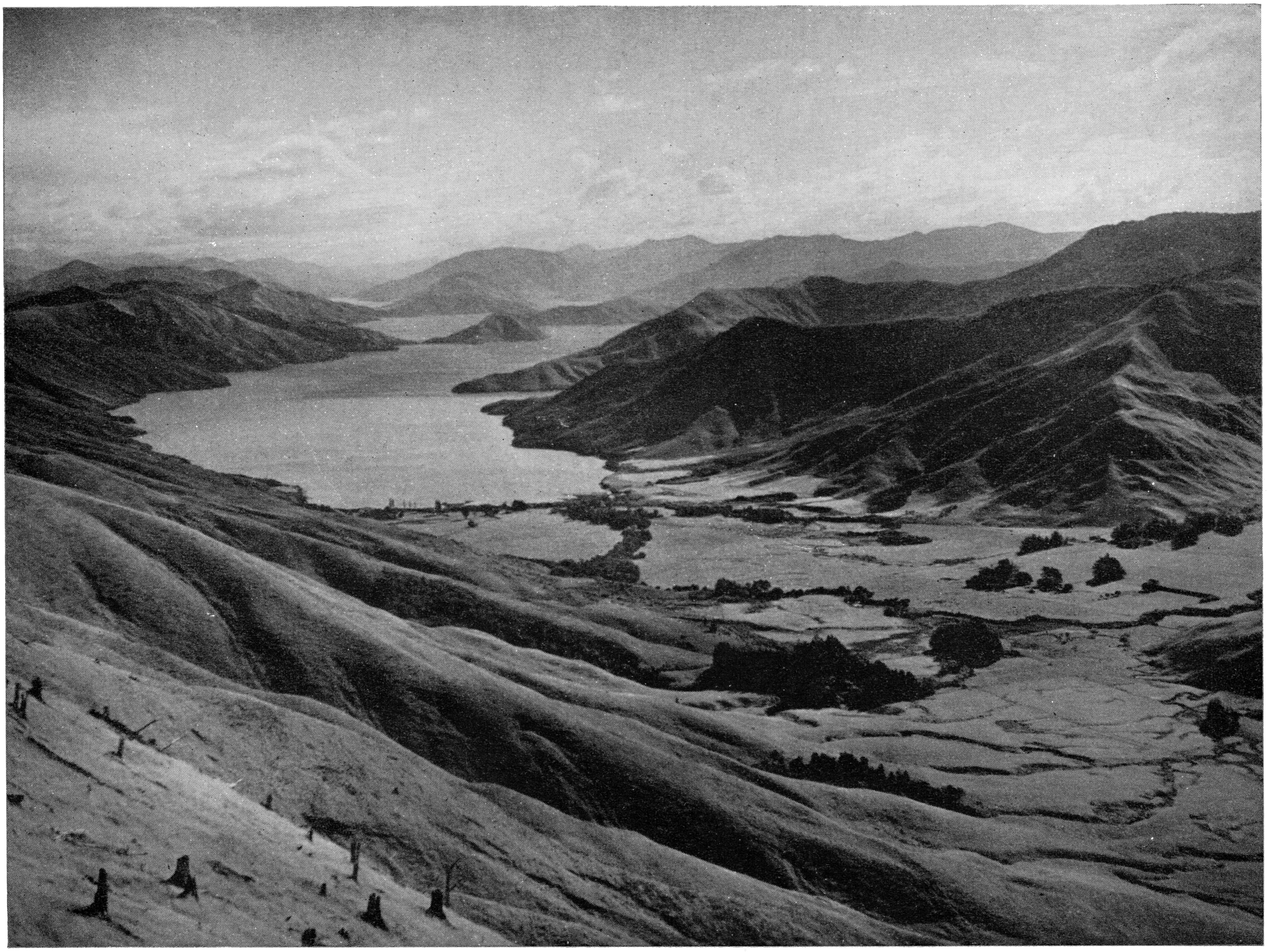


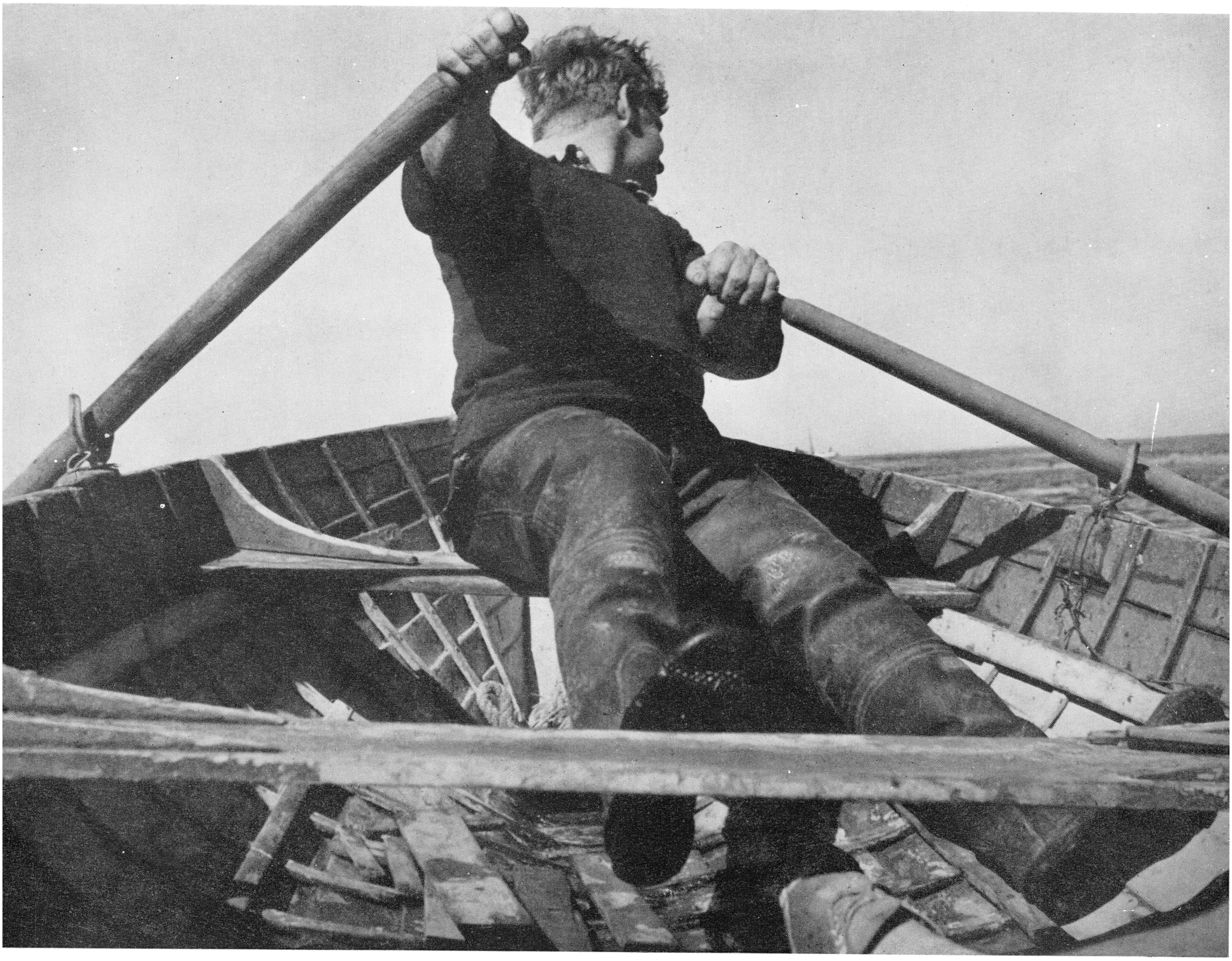
PROSPECT *Queen Charlotte Sound*



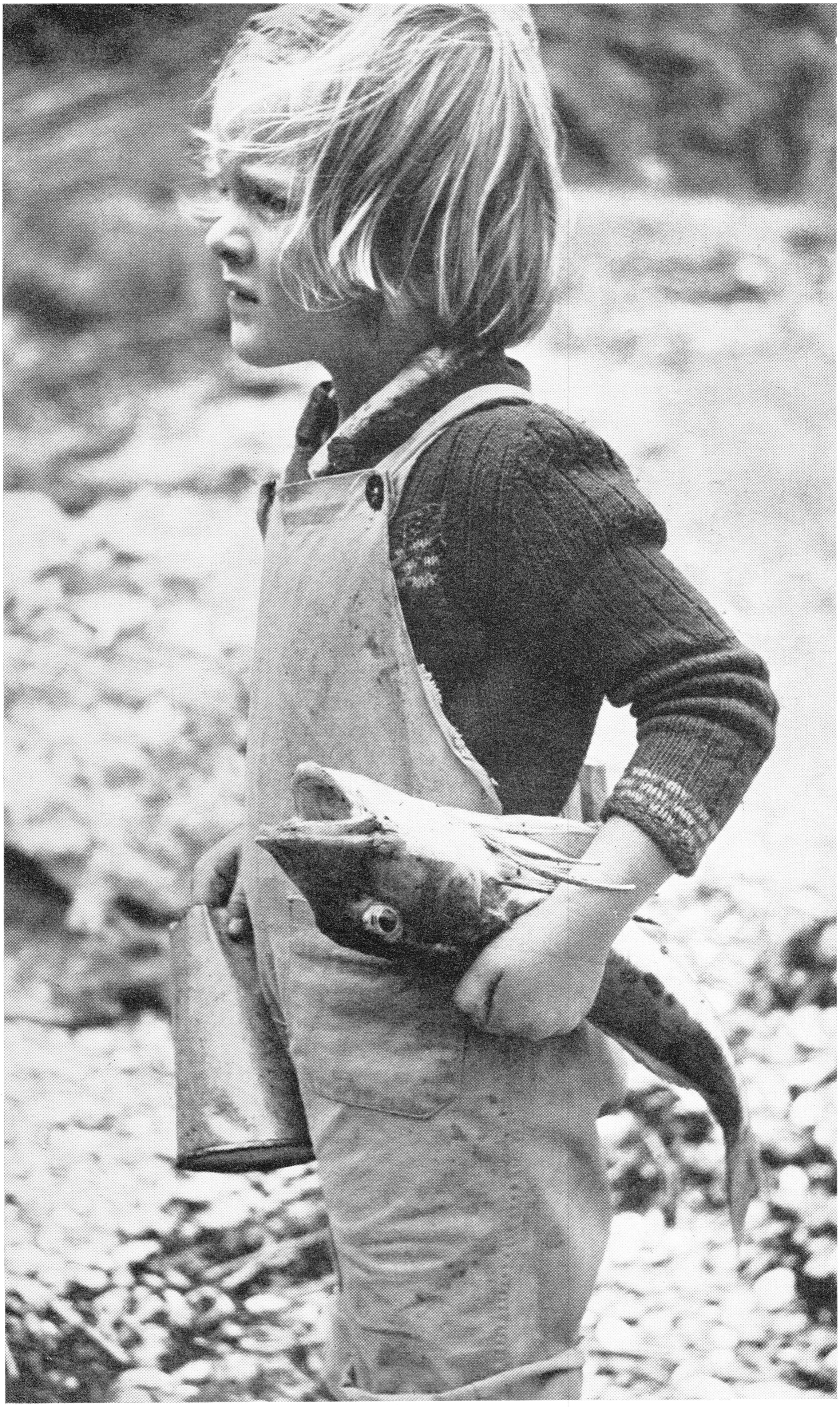
SHADOWS ON THE SEA *Beatrix Bay and Whakatahuri, Marlborough Sounds*

PASTORAL SEA *Keneperu Head, Marlborough Sounds*



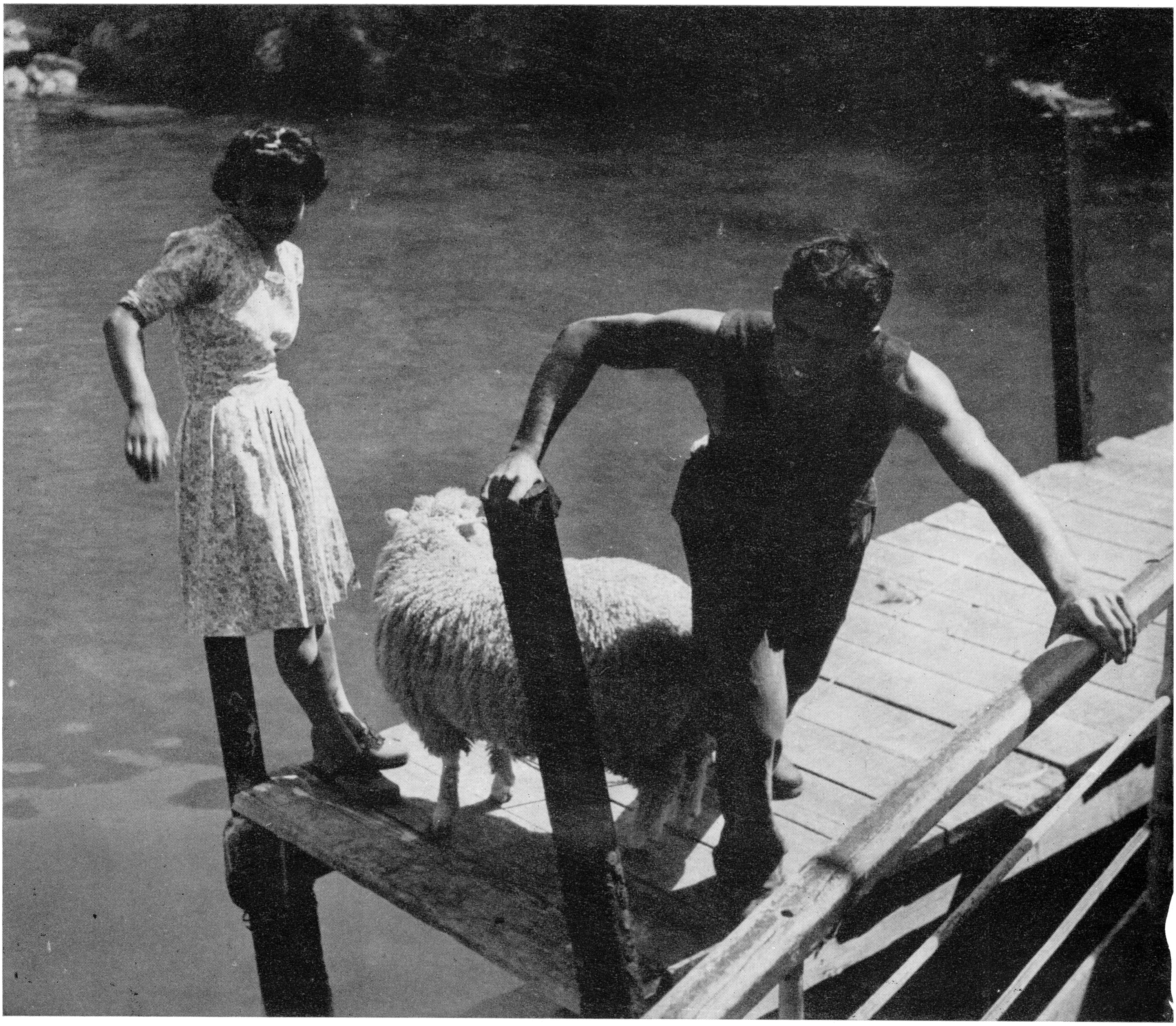


FISHERMAN *Marlborough Sounds*



FISHERGIRL

Marlborough Sounds



FAREWELL *East Bay, Marlborough Sounds*

NOTES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photographic Notes

I HAVE STRESSED THE MECHANICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE CAMERA. Now I must explain my own limitations. I have never processed a film. I have no darkroom experience. Therefore I can give no advice on these matters. But in doing my field work I have always discussed my results with those who have made my enlargements, and from them have learnt from what negatives they have made the best prints. I have few dogmas. I only write that in this book are the photographs, and this is how they were taken. I assure you that the only retouching has been to remove spots, scratches or other blemishes. All clouds are real, and none have been contrived in the darkroom. In other words I have never faked a photograph.

EQUIPMENT Simplicity has been my motto. None of these photographs was taken on a tripod or with the help of an exposure meter or a telephoto lens. My CAMERA has been a 'Rolleicord', f 3.5 lens, speeds between 1 second and 1/300th second. With it I have done almost everything save bake scones. When I started photography FILMS were only orthochromatic. A few years later the advent of panchromatic films aided by red filters made it possible to cut out haze, the enemy of long distance shots; since then I have always used panchromatic films, usually high speed such as Super XX though slower material such as Panatomic has been valuable for its fine grain. For all-purpose work I recommend Super XX as it will do equally as well for bush interiors as for snow scenes.

FILTERS have been my pride and joy. In the main I have relied on Red (Rubin) for effects such as *The View* (page 30) and on Orange (Micro 5) for emphasis of clouds and elimination of haze, for example *Contrast the One Way* (page 56) and *Evening Sky* (page 40). Both filters have an exposure factor of 3½ times. In general the orange filter is preferable because it does not make water or skies too dark. In poor light, such as in *North Island from the South* (page 88) it is best to use no filter.

FLASHGEAR is handy for hut interiors and night scenes, but I have seldom been able to carry it, and none of the photographs in this book was taken with its help. CAMERA CASES are important, both to save precision mechanism from knocks, and to keep it dry in river-crossing; waterproof plastic is satisfactory. An inner bag of black silk will keep the strong alpine light from the sensitive film. Films themselves should be packed in aluminium waterproof containers, sealed with adhesive tape, and, as a double precaution all should be tied firmly inside another waterproof bag.

TECHNIQUE The safest way to learn the value of EXPOSURES is to keep a notebook, and after the trip to hold an inquest on all successes and failures. If in doubt, under-expose. More alpine negatives have been ruined by over-exposure than by the reverse. Difficult light, such as *Inside the Ice Cave* (page 65) demanded f 3.5 and 1/25th second. Exposures in fine weather in the brilliant reflected glacier light with a Super XX film* or the equivalent would be f 22 and 1/100th second, or, if an orange filter is used, f 11 and 1/100th second. I seldom vary this formula,seen to advantage in *Glacier Ascent* (page 76). A standard speed of 1/100th second makes it safe to do without a tripod, and even a man trembling with nervous fatigue can take a steady shot at that speed.

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*I am informed the film is developed in DK76 and the enlargements in D72.

Change your films in the darkest light available, under an oilskin coat or in the shade of a rock, as panchromatic film is eager to pick up light flares. STOPS should be as small as possible, because of the great depth of focus. Where FOCUS at infinity should be blurred, as in *A Dip Begun* (page 37), open the stop to f 5.6 and make the foreground sharp if that is where you need the emphasis.

INFLUENCES Light is your ally, and for both people and land, cross-lighting is best of all; it gives a quality of modelling that holds good for a Maori carving as for a sheep's neck or ridges and valleys. Back-lighting gives shimmer for marine subjects as for snow or river surfaces and if no lens hood is available use the shelter of a tree or a rock to avoid halation. Rain makes photographs flat, but the documentary photographer can use it for atmosphere as in *Flood Waters* (page 42). Scale is best given by small figures and contrasts well with big close-ups where the detail in a man's face places scenery as a back-ground. Bush photography has difficulties of its own, and the rule is to err on the side of over-exposure.

Experience will teach more than text-books. I intend these notes merely as a guide to my own practice, and stress once again that the most perfect technique will not help your results unless you temper your judgment with a feeling for people and for the land and sea. Select your subjects as you would your friends and do not admit a crowd when a handful is better company; that is, take a few good photographs rather than waste film on scenes and attitudes whose interest is mundane and whose indifference is clear to the eyes that must decide when to release that shutter.

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The Mountains, the Bush & the Sea

THIS BOOK records in a way that has never previously been achieved, the unexpected beauty of some of the more rugged parts of New Zealand. It will appeal not only to those who have travelled in the back country, but to all those who are interested in it or who wish to know more about it. All its 97 photographs are unusual, and some of them are here reproduced for the first time.

Although mountain, forest and coast provide Mr. Pascoe's main theme, his keen interest in the people who live in this untamed environment—musterers, prospectors, deer cullers and mountain men and women—is shown in many striking photographs.

The plates are displayed in contrasting pairs, and captions as well as pictures contribute to the author's theme that the land and the people reward even the casual traveller—a theme that is stated in lively fashion in his introduction. Mr. Pascoe's photographic notes at the end of the book will be of particular value to photographers.

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